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S E R M O N XIII.

OF THE TRUTH AND DIVINITY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

EPI. i. 13.

*In whom ye also (trusted), having heard the word of truth,
the gospel of your salvation.*

THAT our religion in gross is true and agreeable SERM.
to reason, is a ground upon which the truth of its XIII.
single doctrines and articles of faith doth lean ; it is
therefore requisite that it first be well supported, or
that we be thoroughly assured thereof. Being there-
fore engaged at other times to discourse upon the
particular points of Christian doctrine, which sup-
pose this general one ; I shall take occasion collate-
rally in these exercises to insist upon this subject ;
supposing in those, what in these we shall endea-
vour to prove ; so both avoiding there such grand
digressions, or the treating upon matters not directly
incident ; and supplying here what seems necessary
or useful there to the confirmation of our faith.

Now in the words I did now read, St. Paul styles
the Christian doctrine (and in many other places of
scripture it is also so called) *the word of truth*, (that

ERM. is, a most true doctrine,) and *the gospel of our salvation*, (that is, a message brought from heaven by our Saviour and his apostles; in which the ways and means of attaining salvation, (that is, of that best happiness which we are capable of,) the overtures thereof from God, and the conditions in order thereto required from us, are declared.) And that we have reason to entertain it as such, I shall immediately address myself to shew.

Εἰραζι. It was anciently objected by Celsus and other adversaries of our religion, that Christianity did exact from men *ψιλὴν καὶ ἀλογον πίστιν, a bare groundless faith*; did impose *νόμους ἀναποδείκτους, laws uncapable of proof*, (that is, as to the goodness and reasonableness of them;) did inculcate this rule, *Μὴ ἔξεταξε, ἀλλὰ μόνον πίστευε, Do not examine or discuss, but only believe*; that it debarred inquiries and debates about truth, slighted the use and improvement of reason, rejected human learning and wisdom, enjoining men to swallow its dictates, without chewing, or any previous examination concerning the reason and truth of them.

The ground of this accusation was surely a great mistake, arising from their not distinguishing that belief, whereby we embrace Christianity itself in gross, from that belief, whereby in consequence to the former we assent to the particular doctrines thereof: especially to such as concern matters supernatural, or exceeding the reach of our natural understanding to penetrate or comprehend. For as to the first kind, that belief whereby we embrace Christianity itself, as true in the gross; I say, it is nowise required upon such terms; our religion doth not obtrude itself upon men in the dark, it doth not bid men to put

out their eyes, or to shut them close; no, nor even SERM. to wink, and then to receive it: it rather obliges XIII. them to open their eyes wide, to go into the clearest Vid. Orig. light; with their best senses to view it thoroughly, in Cels. lib. iii. pag. 142. before they embrace it. It requires not, yea it re-
fuses, ordinarily, a sudden and precipitate assent; λόγος, οὐδέ λόγος, διλα
admitting no man (capable of judging and choosing προσεπειράσθεντος τοι) for himself) to the participation thereof, or acknow- χρεοφυτεύσθεντος τοι
ledging him to be a believer indeed; till (after a &c. Const. ληφθείσθεντος, Apost. viii.
competent time and means of instruction) he de-
clares himself to understand it well, and heartily to
approve it. Never any religion was so little liable
to that censure; none ever so freely exposed itself
to a fair trial at the bar of reason; none ever so
earnestly invited men to consider and weigh its
pretences; yea, provoked them, for its sake and
their own, (at the peril of their souls, and as they
tendered their own best good and safety,) to an
εὐγνώμων, ἔξετασις, an equal and discreet examination
thereof. Other religions have for their justification
insisted upon the examples of ancestors, the pre-
scriptions and customs of times, their large extent
and prevalence among multitudes of people, their
establishment by civil laws, and countenance of
secular powers, (arguments wholly extrinsecal and
of small validity,) declining all other test or trial of
reason: yea, it is remarkable how Celsus, and others
who made the foresaid objection, did contradict and
confute themselves, affirming men ought without
scruple to conform in opinion and practice to the
religion prescribed by the laws of their country, be
they what they will, never so absurd or dishonest^a.

^a Quæ omnia sapiens servabit tanquam legibus jussa, non tanquam Diis grata. *Sen. apud Aug. de Civ. Dei, vi. 10.*

He sunt re-
ligiones,
&c. Lac-
tant. ii. 6.
(pag. 171.)

SERM. Δεῖ φυλάσσειν τὰ εἰς κοινὸν κεκυρωμένα, (things established by common authority must be observed:) and, τὰ παρ' ἑκάστοις ὄρθως ἀν πράττοιτο ταύτη δρώμενα, ὅπῃ ἐκείνοις φίλον,

(things are every where rightly done, being done according to the fashion of each place.) Such were the rules and maxims those men urged. And this was indeed exacting irrational belief; a stifling men's reason, and muzzling their judgments; this was a method enforcing men blindly to yield consent to errors and inconsistencies innumerable. But the teachers and maintainers of Christianity proceeded otherwise; confiding in the pure merit of their cause, they warned men to lay aside all prejudices; to use their best understandings; in a case of such moment, to apply themselves to an industrious and impartial search of the truth: let one for the rest speak their

Lact. ii. 7. sense: *Oportet in ea re maxime, in qua vitæ ratio versatur, sibi quemque confidere, suoque judicio ac propriis sensibus niti ad investigandam et perpendendam veritatem, quam credentem alienis erroribus decipi tanquam ipsum rationis expertem: dedit omnibus Deus pro virili portione sapientiam, ut et inaudita investigare possent, et audita perpendere: We ought especially, says he, every one of us in that matter, which chiefly concerns our manner of life, to confide in ourselves; and rather with our own judgment and our proper senses strive to find out and judge of the truth, than believing other*

Omnem istam ignobilem Deorum turbam, quam longo ævo longa superstitione congregavit sic (inquit) adorabimus, ut meminerimus cultum ejus magis ad morem, quam ad rem pertinere. Id. 16.

—Colebat quod reprehendebat, agebat quod arguebat, quod culpabat adorabat. Aug. ib. de Seneca.

men's errors to be deceived, like things void of reason : God hath given all men a competent share of wisdom, that they might both search out things not told them, and weigh what they hear. So especially just and candid was Christianity in its first offering itself to the minds of men. It proounds indeed and presses, as evident in itself, the worth and consequence of the matter ; but refers the decision on either part (so far as concerns every particular man) to the verdict of that reason and conscience, with which to such purposes God hath indued every man. And that it can proceed no other-
wise appears further, from the nature of that faith it requires : it commends faith as a great virtue, and therefore supposes it both voluntary and reasonable ; it promises ample rewards thereto, and so implies it a work not of necessity or chance, but of care and industry ; it declares infidelity to be very blameable, and threatens severe punishment thereto ; why ? because it signifies irrational negligence or perverseness.

Eg. προσαγ-
ετική μητ-
έλπειν λι-
γος, ισονομος
συγχατάθι-
σις. Clem.
Alex.

In fine, Christianity doth not inveigle any man by sleight, nor compel him by force, (being indeed commonly destitute of those advantages ; nor being able to use them, if it would,) but fairly by reason persuades him to embrace it ; it doth not therefore shun examination, nor disclaim the judgment of reason ; but earnestly seeks and procures the one, cheerfully and confidently appeals to the other. *Examine all things; hold fast that which is good. Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God. See that no man deceive you. Be always ready, with meekness and respect, to give to every one that demands it of you an account of the hope*

1 Thess. v.
21.
1 John iv. 1.
Mat.xxv. 4.
Eph. v. 6.
1 Pet. iii. 15.

SERM. *in you.* These are the maxims which Christianity
XIII. goes upon in the propagation and maintenance of
itself.

Indeed after it hath convinced men of its truth in general, having evidenced the truth of its fundamental principles, it then requires a full and cordial assent, without exception, to its particular doctrines, grounded upon or deduced from them. When, I say, it hath, to the satisfaction of a man's mind, with solid reason made good its principles; it then enjoins men to surcease further scruple or debate concerning what it teaches or draws from them; which is a proceeding most reasonable and conformable to the method used in the strictest sciences: for the principles of any science being either demonstrated out of some higher science, or evidenced by fit experiments to common sense; and being thence granted and received, it is afterward unlawful and absurd to challenge the conclusions collected from them; so if it have been proved and acknowledged that our principles are true, (for instance, that God is perfectly veracious, and that Christian religion hath *his* authority, or attestation to it,) it will then be a part of absurd levity and inconsistency to question any particular proposition evidently contained therein; and in this sense or in these cases it is true indeed that Christianity doth engage us to believe simply and purely, doth silence natural reason, and condemn curious inquiry, and prohibit dispute, especially to persons of meaner capacities or improvements. And thus, I take it, those Christians of old were to be understood, who so much commended immediate faith, excluded reason from being too busy in matters of religion, discountenanced that curiosity which

searched into, and would needs sound, those inscrutable mysteries which our religion teaches. Our religion then will allow (yea it invites and exhorts) an infidel to consider and judge of its truth, although it will not allow a Christian to be so vain and inconstant, as to doubt of any particular doctrine therein; seeing by so questioning a part, he in effect renounces the whole, and subverts the foundation of his faith; at least ceases thereby to be a steady Christian. I might then well invert our adversaries' discourse, and offer it as a good argument of our religion its truth, that it alone among all religions, with a candour and confidence peculiar to truth, calls us to the light, is willing, yea desirous, to undergo trial; I add, yea challenges, as its due from all men, and demands it of them as a necessary duty, to hear it, to consider it seriously, to pass sentence upon it; for as commonly error and groundless conceit, being conscious of their own weakness, are timorous and suspicious, and thence ready to decline all proof and conflict of reason; so truth, knowing its own strength, is daring and resolute; enters boldly into the lists, being well assured (or hopeful) of good success in the combat.

Which proceeding, proper to Christianity, is in itself very plausible, and may well beget a favourable prejudice on its side; and that it is not confident without reason, will appear upon our examining the principles and grounds on which it stands. The first principle of Christianity (common thereto and all other religions) is, that there is one God, (sovereign and transcendent in all perfections; the Maker and Governor of all things.) The next (which also no religion doth not acknowledge) is, that God

SERM. is perfectly veracious, so that whatever appears to
XIII. be asserted, or attested to, by him, is certainly true; which principles (by reasons I hope proper and sufficient) I partly have proved, and partly shall hereafter upon occasion shew. A third is, that God is the author of the Christian doctrine and law; that he hath revealed this doctrine to mankind, and confirmed it by his testimony; that he hath imposed this law upon us, and established it by his authority. This principle (being the foundation and sum of our faith) involves matter of fact; and consequently, being not evident immediately in itself, doth (for a full conviction of a man's mind, and producing therein a solid persuasion) require a rational probation; and that it may appear we believe it like reasonable men, not (as pagans and Mahometans, and those of other sects do^a.) upon wilful resolution, or by mere chance, as also for settling the ground of particular articles comprehended under this, I shall endeavour to shew the reasonableness thereof; advancing my discourse by several steps and degrees. I observe first, that,

1. It is reasonable to suppose that God should at some time or season fully and clearly reveal unto men the truth concerning himself, and concerning them, as he and they stand related to each other; concerning his nature and will, concerning our state and duty, respectively: the nature and attributes of God, the nature and qualities of man, being compared, do persuade thus much.

It is apparent to common experience, that man-

^a Μάθωμεν τοίνυν οὕτω πρὸς Ἑλληνας διαλέγεσθαι, ἵνα μὴ ὄμεν ὡς θρέμματα καὶ βοσκήματα, ἀλλ' ὅμεν παρεσκευασμένοι περὶ τῆς ἐν ἡμῖν ἀπεῖδες. Chrys. in 1 Cor. i. 17.

kind being left to itself (especially in matters of this kind) is very insufficient to direct itself; that it is apt to lie under woful ignorance, to wander in uncertainty, to fall into error, to possess itself with vain conceit, to be abused with any sort of delusion, which either the malice of wicked spirits, or the subtlety of naughty men, or the wildness of its own fond passions and desires can put upon it or bring it under; it is consequently exposed to all those vices, dishonourable, hurtful, and destructive to its nature; and to all those miseries, which from ignorance or error, from vice and wickedness, do naturally spring; especially to an estrangement from God, and an incapacity of his love and favour. The two only remedies of all these mischiefs, natural light and primitive tradition, how little they did avail to cure them; how the one was too faint in itself, and easily lost in mists of prejudice from ill education and bad custom, prevailing generally; how the other (besides its other defects) soon was polluted, and indeed quite spoiled by adulterate mixtures of fond, impure, and vile superstitions, woful experience doth more than enough evince. We see, that not only the generality of mankind did sometime lie in this sad condition, but that even the most elevated and refined wits (those among men who by all possible improvement of their reason did endeavour to raise themselves from this low estate; to rescue their minds from the common ignorance, the mistakes, the superstitions and follies of the world) could by no means in any good measure attain those ends; for what did their earnest inquiries or their restless studies produce, but dissatisfaction and perplexity of mind? wherein did their eager disputations conclude, but in irre-

SER M. concilable differences of opinion, and greater uncertainties than were when they began? Most were plunged into a desperate scepticism, (a doubt and diffidence of all things;) none arrived higher than some faint conjectures on some unsteady opinions concerning those matters of highest consequence; such notions as were not effectual enough to produce in them a practice, in any good measure, suitable to the dignity of man's nature, to the duty he owes to God, to the capacities man hath of doing and receiving good; from which due glory to God or much

Rom. i. 21. benefit to man did accrue. *'Εμαρτυρησαν ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς,* *they were made vain* (or, they were frustrated, deluded, befooled) in their reasonings and disputes; the result of their busy speculations was, that *their foolish heart was darkened*; so darkened, that with all the light they had, they could not see any thing; at least not clearly discern what

1 Cor. i. 21. chiefly it concerned them to know; *The world by wisdom* (by all the wisdom it could get) *did not know God*; did not acquire a requisite measure of knowledge in divine things: did not however know him so, as to glorify him; as to thank him for the benefits received from him; as to bring forth worthy

Rom. i. 21. fruits of piety and virtue. So much St. Paul observed of them; and not he alone did observe it, but even themselves were sensible of this their unhappiness;

—Hinc causa mali mortalibus aegris Naturam nescire Dei. whence so many complaints concerning the blindness and infirmity of man's mind, concerning the obscurity and uncertainty of things, concerning the insuperable difficulty of finding truth, concerning the miserable consequences from these, do occur among them.

Now this being the natural state of men, desti-

tute of divine conduct and assistance ; do they not SERM.
(I pray) greatly need another light to guide them XIII.
in this darkness, or to bring them out of it ; a helpful hand, to free them from these inconveniences ?
and is it not reasonable to suppose, that God, who is alone able, will also be willing in due time to afford it ? He, who in nature is most benign and bountiful, most pitiful and gracious ; whose goodness fills the ^{Ps. xxxiii. 5.} earth, and whose mercy is over all his works ; he, ^{civ. 24.} who bears to man the special relation of a Father, and bears to him a suitable tenderness of affection and good-will ; he, all whose attributes seem concerned in engaging him upon this performance ; not only his goodness to *instigate* him, and his wisdom to *direct* him, but even his justice in some manner to *oblige* him thereto.

1. His goodness : *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?* Yea ; though it is unnatural and unusual, it is yet possible she may, because nature in her is not unalterably constant and the same ; but the immutable God cannot so cease to be mindful of, to be compassionate toward, his children. That gracious ear cannot hear mankind groan so dolefully under bitter oppressions ; that pitiful eye cannot behold his own dear offspring, the flower of his creation, lying in so comfortless, so remediless distress, without feeling some pity, without being moved to reach some relief ; such notes surely cannot be grateful, such spectacles cannot be pleasant to him, nor can he then forbear long to provide means of removing them from his presence. We esteem it want of goodness (yea an effect of very bad disposition) not to direct a bewildered traveller,

SERM. not to relieve, if we can, even a stranger fallen into
 XIII. great distress : and if we being in such degree bad,
 are inclinable to perform such good offices, how much
 more ready may we suppose him, who is goodness
 itself, (goodness infinite and absolute,) to do the like
 for all mankind, so much needing his guidance and
 help ! He who hath settled our outward estate in
 so advantageous a posture, who hath made provi-
 sions so various and ample for the needs and con-
 veniences (yea for the pleasure) of our bodies, would
 he have so little care over our better part, and leave
 our souls so slenderly furnished, letting them pine;
 as it were, for want of spiritual sustenance ? How
 can we think his good providence defective in so
 main, so principal a part thereof ? Thus doth divine
 goodness (to my apprehension) very strongly con-
 firm our supposition.

Vid. Ezek.
16.

2. And his wisdom enforces the same : God made
 the world to express his goodness and to display his
 glory; and his goodness who can be sensible of, his
 glory who can perceive, who can promote, but man ?
 but he who is endued with reason, enabling him to
 reflect upon the good he feels, to admire the excel-
 lency he discovers, to render grateful acknowledg-
 ments for the one, to utter acclamations of praise to
 the other ? which purposes yet will be utterly (or at
 least in great measure) frustrated, should God for
 ever suffer men to continue in such ignorance, doubt,
 or mistake concerning himself ; if men are not fully
 persuaded that he made the world and governs it,
 how can they pay those due homages of dread to
 his glorious power, of admiration to his excellent
 wisdom, of love to his transcendent goodness ? This
 grand theatre would, as it were, stand useless, and

all the wonders acted thereupon would appear in SERM.
vain, should there be wanting a spectator; should man be altogether blind or heedless; yea man's faculty itself, that his seeing faculty of mind, would signify nothing, were there not a light rendering things visible to him. Common sense hath dictated to men, that man is capable of shewing respect, of performing duty and service, to God, that also God requires and expects them from him; the same declares, that God best knows what kinds of service, what expressions of respect best please him. Reason tells, that God would have man act in the best manner, according to the design of his nature; that he would have the affairs of men proceed in some good order; that he even desires earnestly the good of men, and delights in their happiness: and if so, it is reasonable to suppose, that being most wise he should dispose fit means for accomplishing those ends; for securing himself, as it were, from disappointment; that therefore he should impart to men a competent knowledge of himself, should declare his good-will and pleasure to them, should reveal both the best way of their serving him, and the best means of their attaining happiness to themselves. So divine wisdom grounds an argument for our supposition.

3. God's justice also seems not a little to favour it: every good governor thinks it just to take care that his subjects should understand his pleasure, and be acquainted with his laws; he causes them therefore to be solemnly promulgated, that all may take notice; if any of them by long disuse are become unknown, he revives the knowledge of them by new proclamations; to quicken obedience he propounds

SERM. fit rewards, and deters from disobedience by menacing suitable punishments, knowing man's nature, XIII. resty and unapt to move without these spurs : and is it likely the sovereign Governor and Judge of all the world should observe less equity in his administrations ? that he should neglect any means necessary or apt to promote his subjects' performance of their duty, to prevent the breaches of his laws ? He that loves righteousness above all, he that so earnestly desires to be duly obeyed, he that infinitely delights in his subjects' good ; can he fail sufficiently to declare his will, to encourage men to comply with it, to terrify them from transgressing it ? will he suffer his laws to remain unknown, or uncertain ; will he not consider the infirmities of his subjects, will he leave any fair apology for disobedience ? No, the superlative justice of God seems to persuade the contrary.

4. I might add, that generally it seems unbecoming the Majesty Divine, that he should endure the world, his kingdom, to continue under a perpetual usurpation and tyranny ; to suffer that his imperial throne should be possessed, his authority abused, his name insulted over, by enemies and rebels against him, (by evil spirits, whether those of hell or those on earth;) that a cruel fiend, that a cursed ghost, that a brute beast, that a chimera of man's fancy should be worshipped, while himself is forgotten and neglected, is dishonoured and despised ; that iniquity and wickedness (with all the filthy brood of ignorance and error) should every where flourish and domineer, while righteousness and virtue lie prostrate, and are trampled upon : this surely the King of Glory, the great Patron of goodness, will not permit

Acts x. 38. Eph. ii. 2.

to be ; sooner rather may we conceive, that, to remove these indecencies and these mischiefs, he would presently turn the world into a desert and solitude, or pour a deluge of water over the face of the earth, or with flames of vengeance consume it into ashes.

We cannot indeed judge or determine concerning the special circumstances or limits of God's dealing toward man in this particular ; concerning the time when, the manner how, the measure according to which, God will dispense those revelations of himself : those depend upon mysteries of counsel and wisdom surpassing our comprehension. That God should for a while connive at men's ignorance, and suffer them to grope after divine truth ; to try them, as he did the Israelites in the wilderness, how they would behave themselves in that state ; to prove how they would use their talent of natural light, to make them sensible of their own infirmity, to shew them whence all their welfare must proceed, on whom all their happiness depends, to make them more able to value, more desirous to embrace, the redress vouchsafed them ; as also, to demonstrate his own great clemency, longsuffering, and patience ; that, I say, for such purposes, and others unsearchable by our shallow understanding, God should for some time forbear with a full evidence to declare all his mind to men, is not so strange or unlikely ; but that for ever, through all courses of time, he should leave men in so forlorn a condition, in such a depth of ignorance, such perplexity of doubt, such captivity under sin, such subjection to misery, seems not probable, much less can it seem unprobable that he hath done it : it cannot, I say, in any reason seem misbecoming the goodness, wisdom, or justice of God, clearly to discover to us,

SERM.
XIII.Acts xvii.
xiv. 16.Deut. viii.
15, 16.

Exod. xvi.

8.

Vid. Gen.
xv. xvi. &c.

16 *Of the Truth of the Christian Religion.*

SERM. what he requires us to do, what good he intends for
XIII. us, what way leads to our happiness, how we may
avoid misery. This consideration, if it do not prove
peremptorily that God cannot but sometime make
such a revelation, nor that he yet hath actually done
it, (forasmuch as we cannot reach the utmost pos-
sibilities of things, nor are fit judges of what God
must necessarily do; although to my apprehension
this sort of reasoning, with due caution used, subsist-
ing in general terms, and not over precisely applying
it to particular cases (implicated by circumstances
and specialties not falling under our judgment) hath
great force;) yet it removes all obstruction to our be-
lief, and disposes us with more readiness to admit the
reasons which follow: for it being not unprobable,
yea, according to the reason of the thing, very prob-
able, that he should do it, we have cause with at-
tention and expectation of success on this hand to
regard the arguments that pretend to prove he hath
done it.

This is the first step of our Discourse, at which we
shall stop for the present.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N X I V.

OF THE IMPIETY AND IMPOSTURE OF PAGANISM AND MAHOMETANISM.

EPH. i. 13.

*In whom ye also (trusted), having heard the word of truth,
the gospel of your salvation.*

THAT the Christian doctrine is what St. Paul here S E R M. calls it, *a word of truth*, and did proceed from the God of truth, is the proposition we are endeavouring to verify and persuade. To that purpose we did first discourse, that it is very probable God should sometime clearly and fully reveal his mind to men, concerning matters relating to his own glory and service, their good and happiness.

II. I now proceed another step, and assert, that no other revelation of that kind and importance hath been made; that no other religion, which hath been or is now in being, can with good probability pretend to have thus proceeded from God; so as by him to have been designed for a general, a perpetual, a complete instruction and obligation of mankind. There have appeared but *three* pretences thereto;

SERM. that of ancient Paganism, that of Mahometanism,
XIV. and that of Judaism, (for the more particular pretensions of enthusiastical impostors have been subordinate either to Christianity itself, or to one of those ; and besides having found no considerable progress or continuance in the world, nor countenance, as it were, from Providence, are not pertinent to this consideration, besides that they are all generally disclaimed;) but that none of those three pretences are well grounded, I shall, examining each briefly, shew : (briefly, I say, for I need not insist on them largely, the matter having passed so many good pens, especially that excellent one of Grotius ; however, it falling in my way and method, I shall offer what hath concerning it occurred to my thoughts.)

For the first, ancient Paganism ; it did indeed (in the parcels thereof, or by retail) pretend to a kind of divine revelation ; that it derived its notions and its forms of practice from the direction of invisible powers, given to single persons or places, in several ways, (by immediate apparition, by prophetical inspiration, by significant events or prodigies;) but it did not, nor could pretend to any one uniform revelation from the sovereign God, solemnly delivered and directed to all mankind ; which is an argument, not only that those pretended revelations were imperfect and insufficient to the ends propounded, but also false and counterfeit : for we may well suspect those edicts which are clandestinely set up in corners, and which run not in the king's name, nor are marked with his royal signature, to have proceeded from impostors or from rebels ; especially if the matter of them doth not advance, but depress his authority ; doth not promote, but prejudice his in-

terest ; doth not comport with, but contravene his SERM.
pleasure, otherwise declared. And such was the XIV.
manner, such the matter of those pagan revelations. Put the whole body of that religion (if I may so call it) together, and you have nothing but a lump of confusion and inconsistency, of deformity and filthiness, of vanity and folly, little as may be therein tending to the reverence of God, or to the good of man¹; to the promoting virtue and goodness in human conversation, to the breeding love and goodwill in men toward one another, to the maintaining justice, peace, and good order in societies ; much apt to produce the contrary effects. It was not, I say, ever one simple or uniform, one fixed or constant thing, but, according to difference of place and time, various and mutable ; diversely shaped and modelled, according to the fancy and humour, design or interest of the state that allowed it, the priests that managed it, and the people that received it; a plain sign, that (excepting some general scattered notions deduced from ancient tradition) it did wholly proceed from human device, or from a worse cause, the suggestion of evil spirits, abusing the fondness and pravity of men. Survey it, and what shall you find therein, but a bundle of idle, ill-contrived, incredible, and inconsistent stories, (arguing nothing of truth or sincerity, little of wit or discretion in those who invented them;) those attended by practices foolish, lewd, and cruel ; unworthy of human nature, contrary to common sense and honesty ? Their worship (that of the supreme Lord

¹ Inde furor vulgo, quod numina vicinorum
Odit uterque locus, dum solos credit habendos
Esse Deos, quos ipse colit.— *Juv. Sat. xv.*

SERM. being neglected, &c.) you will see directed towards
XIV. objects most improper and unbecoming : to the ghosts of dead men ; men in their lives (if we may trust the reports of their devoutest adorers) famous for nothing so much as for vicious enormities, for thefts and rapines, for murders and parricides, for horrid lusts, adulteries, rapes, and incests ; and such persons, alive or dead, what good or wise man would not rather loathe and despise, than worship or respect ? to somewhat, though not otherwise, yet in degree of nature, worse than those, even to brute beasts ; to the most vile, the most mischievous of them, (dogs, serpents, crocodiles;) to pay veneration unto which, how unspeakably abject a mind doth it argue ! Yea they stooped lower, even to creatures inanimate, to the stars and elements, to rivers and trees, and other such things, which we see acting by natural necessity, not yielding any signification of understanding, of sense, of life, in them ; which therefore, so far inferior to us in nature, how sottish a baseness was it to adore ! nay, they descended to a lower degree, if it may be, of folly, dedicating temples and offering sacrifices to things even void of subsistence, to mere qualities and accidents of things, to the passions of our minds, to the diseases of our bodies, to the accidents of our lives. Who would think any man could be so mad as to reckon impudence, that odious vice ; a fever, that troublesome disease ; or fortune, (that unaccountable name of nothing, which wise men so little trust, and fools so much complain of,) among things divine and venerable ? Can I mention any thing worse than all these, which the degenerate ignorance and naughtiness of man hath crouched to ? Yes,

(with a folly of all most wretched and deplorable,) SERM.
they fawned upon, they obeyed, they offered their XIV.
dearest pledges of life and fortune to the sworn ene-
mies, as of God and goodness, so of their own good
and welfare, to the very cursed fiends of hell : whom,
if they had not been extremely blind and senseless,
by the quality of those rites and mysteries they sug-
gested, (so bloody and cruel, so lewd and foul,) they
might easily have detected to be so. Such objects
as these was their devotion spent upon, to these
they paid their respect, in these they reposed their
confidence. And was such a religion likely to pro-
ceed from God? was it like to produce any glory to
him, or any benefit to man? From such thorns,
what fruits can we hope should sprout of good life,
of sound morality? what piety toward God, what
justice, truth, or goodness toward man; what so-
briety or purity in themselves, can we expect should
arise from such conceits and such practices? Surely
no other than those which St. Paul describes in the
first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, and in
the second of the Epistle to the Ephesians, and St.
Peter, 1 Ep. iv. 3. which history plainly shews to
have been no slanderous imputations upon Gen-
tilism. If any good did appear in the conversation
of some men who followed that religion, it is not to
be imputed to the influence of that, but to some
better cause ; to the relics of good nature ; to the
glimmerings of natural light breaking forth in some,
and by their precept or example conveyed to others ;
to the necessary experience concerning the mischiefs
of vice and advantages of virtue ; or perhaps also
to secret whispers and impressions of divine grace
upon some men's minds, vouchsafed in pity to them,

SERM. and others whom they might teach or lead into
 XIV. ways somewhat better than those common ones of
 extreme wickedness and folly : to these, I say, or
 such causes, all instances of practice in any measure
 innocent or commendable may rather be ascribed,
 than to that religion, which was much apter to cor-
 rupt and debauch, than to better or civilize men ;
 for with what intention soever they were spoken,
 there was not much of real calumny in those words
 of Lucretius,

————— *sæpius olim*
Religio peperit scelerata, atque improba facta.

But it is needless to discourse much against that
 which hath no reasonable patron, and which scarce
 any wise man, when it was in fashion, did seriously
 think to have had any truth or reality in it. Plato,
 you know, often inveighs against the inventors of
 those beastly fables in heathen theology, (upon
 which yet all the economy of their religious prac-
 tice did depend;) Aristotle attributes the constitu-
 tion of those religions to the subtlety of statesmen:
 there is none of the Fathers, I think, or any other
 disputer against heathenism, who hath more di-
 rectly or earnestly oppugned it than Pliny hath.

Arist. Me-
 taph. xii. 8.
 Lib. ii. cap. 7.
 Vid. Plut. de Superst. p. 291.
 De Leg. x. &c.
 De Div. ii. p. 240.
 Tusc. ix. 1. Ep. 301.
 There was few, or none, of the philosophers, who
 did not signify his dislike or contempt of the vulgar
 opinions and practices concerning religion ; what
 Cicero saith of one part, the wiser sort did judge of
 all : *Tota res est inventa fallaciis aut ad quæstum,*
aut ad superstitionem, aut ad errorem,^b (The whole
 business was deceitfully forged either for gain, or

^b *Hæc et dicuntur et creduntur stultissime, et plena sunt futi-*
litatis, summæque levitatis. Balbus in Cic. de N. D. 2.

Vid. August. de Civit. D. lib. iv. 33. vi. 10.

out of superstition, or from mistake.) They did indeed, most or all of them, in their external behaviour, comply with common practice, out of a politic discretion, for their safety and quiet sake : but in their inward thoughts and judgments they (as by many passages in their writings doth appear) believed nothing, nor liked any thing in it : they observed those things, as Seneca said, *tanquam legibus jussa, non tanquam diis grata*, (not as acceptable to the Gods themselves, but as commanded by the laws of their country.) And indeed this dissimulation was so notorious, that even the vulgar discerned it ; and therefore seldom the wiser men were reputed among them the most religious, but liable to accusation for impiety ; and some of them, ye know, suffered extremities upon that score, who could not altogether conceal that contempt, which the vanity of popular superstitions had begotten toward them in their hearts.

I might add, that all those pagan religions did vanish together with the countenance of secular authority and power sustaining them ; which shews plainly enough, that they had little or no root in the hearty belief or approbation of those who professed them.

And thus much may suffice, I suppose, to declare, that paganism did not proceed from divine revelation, but from human invention or suggestion diabolical.

I shall only adjoin, that the considering this case of heathens may be of good use (and to that use indeed St. Paul hath largely applied it) in confirming what we before urged, the great need of some full and plain revelation to the world of God's mind, in

SERM.
XIV.

SER.M. order to God's glory and man's good ; as also it is of singular use, (which also the same apostle frequently did put it to,) by the contemplation thereof, to discover our great obligations to bless and thank God for his great mercy in revealing his heavenly truth to us, from whence we are freed from errors and mischiefs so deplorable ; which otherwise, from human infirmity and the Devil's malice, we should easily (and in a manner necessarily) have incurred.

That pretence was ancienter in standing ; but there hath, even since Christianity, started up another, (Mahometanism,) which, if not upon other accounts, yet in respect to its age, and to the port it bears in the world, demands some consideration ; for it hath continued a long time, and hath vastly overspread the earth : neither is it more formidable in its looks, than peremptory in its words ; vaunting itself to be no less than a complete, a general, an ultimate declaration of God's pleasure, cancelling and voiding all others that have gone before. But examining both the substance and circumstances thereof, considering the quality of the instruments by whom, of the times when, it was introduced ; of the places where, of the people who first or afterward did receive it ; the manner of its rise, progress, and continuance ; as also the matter it teaches or enjoins ; we shall not find stamped on it the genuine characters of a divine original and authority, but have great reason to deem it a brood of most lewd and impudent cozenage. In times of great disturbance and confusion, when barbarous nations, like torrents, did overflow the world, and turned all things upside down ; in times of general corruption and disorder in men's minds and manners, when, even

among Christians, ignorance and superstition, dissension and uncharitableness, impiety and iniquity did greatly prevail ; in a very blind and obscure corner of the earth, among a crew of wild thieves and runagates, (such have those Arabians been always famed and known to be,) this sect had its birth and fosterage ; among those fierce and savage overrunners of the world it got its growth and stature ; into this sort of people, (being indeed in its constitution well accommodated to their humour and genius,) it was partly insinuated by juggling tricks, partly driven by seditious violence ; the first author hereof being a person, according to the description given of him in their own legends, of no honest or honourable qualities, but having all the marks of an impostor ; rebellious and perfidious, inhuman and cruel, lewd and lascivious, of a base education, of a fraudulent and turbulent disposition, of a vicious life, pretending to enthusiasms, and working of wonders ; but these such as were both in their nature absurd and incredible, and for their use vain and unprofitable : at such a season and in such a soil, by such means and by such a person, (abetted by associates like himself, whom his arts or their interests had inveigled to join with him,) was this religion first planted ; and for its propagation it had that great advantage of falling in the way of barbarous people, void of learning and civility, and not prepossessed with other notions or any sense of religion ; who thence (as mankind is naturally susceptive of religious impressions) were capable and apt to admit any religion first offering itself, especially one so gross as this was, so agreeable to their furious humours and lusts. Afterward being furnished with

SERM. such champions, it diffused itself by rage and terror
XIV. of arms, convincing men's minds only by the sword,
and using no other arguments but blows. Upon
the same grounds of ignorance and force it still sub-
sists, neither offering for, nor taking against itself
any reason ; refusing all examination, and, upon ex-
treme penalties, forbidding any dispute about its
truth ; being indeed so far (whether out of judg-
ment or fatal instinct) wise, as conscious to itself, or
foreboding, that the letting in of a little light, and a
moderate liberty of discussing its pretences, would
easily overthrow it. Now that divine wisdom should
choose those black and boisterous times to publish
his will, is as if the king should purposely order his
proclamation to be made in a tempestuous night,
when no man scarce dared to stir out, nor any man
could well see what was done, or hear what was
said : much fitter surely to that purpose were serene
and calm day, a time of general civility and peace,
like that of Augustus Cæsar. That the declara-
tion of God's mind should issue from the deserts
of Arabia, (that den of robbers,) is as if the king
should cause his edicts to be set up in the blindest
and dirtiest nook of the suburbs : the market-cross
surely, or the exchange, (the place of most general
and ordinary concourse,) such as, in respect to the
world, was the flourishing empire of Rome, were
more convenient, and wisely chosen for that pur-
pose. That, passing over the more gentle and tract-
able part of his people, a prince should send his laws
to a rabble of banditti ; should pick out for his mes-
senger a most dissolute varlet, attended with a crew
of desperate ruffians, resolved to buffet and rifle all
they met, were an odd way of proceeding : to com-

municate his pleasure unto the better and more orderly sort of people, (such as were the subjects of that well governed empire;) by persons of good meaning, mild disposition, and innocent behaviour, (such as were the apostles of our Lord;) in a quiet and gentle manner, (such as these only used;) would surely better become a worthy prince. Thus even the exterior circumstances of Mahometanism, (both absolutely and in comparison,) belonging to its rise, its growth, its continuance, (so full of indecency, of iniquity, of inhumanity,) ground strong presumptions against its divinity; or rather, plainly demonstrate that it could not proceed from God, whose truth cannot need such instruments or such courses to maintain it, whose goodness certainly abhors them. But further, if we look into the matter and inward frame thereof, we shall find it a mass of absurd opinions, odd stories, and uncouth ceremonies; compounded chiefly of the dregs of Christian heresies, together with some ingredients of Judaism and Paganism confusedly jumbled, or unskillfully tempered together. From Christian heresies it seems to have derived its negative doctrines, opposite to Christianity; as for instance, when allowing Christ much respect, it yet denies his being the Son of God, and that he did really suffer; rejecting his true story, it affixes false ones upon him: as also some positive ones; for example, that unreasonable opinion, so much misbecoming God, that God hath a body, (Mahomet, forsooth, once touched his hand, and felt it very cold,) might be drawn from the Anthropomorphites; that doctrine concerning the fatal determination of all events, (so prejudicial to all religion, subverting the foundations of justice between

SERM. God and man, man's free choice in serving God,
XIV.

God's free disposal of rewards suitable to men's actions,) they probably borrowed from the Manichees, a sect that much obtained in those eastern parts. The Jew contributed his ceremonies of circumcision and frequent purgations by washing, his abstinence from swine's flesh, his allowance of polygamy and divorce: I might add, that perhaps from him they filched that proud, inhuman, and uncivil humour of monopolizing divine favour and good-will to themselves; so of restraining their own kindness and respect to persons of their profession, or sect; condemning, despising, and hating all the world beside themselves; calling all others dogs, and adjudging all to certain damnation; and, which is more, affirming that all of their belief, how wicked soever their lives have been, shall at length assuredly partake of salvation: so partial do they make Almighty God, so addicted to a mere name and outward show, feigning him, as in shape so in passions, human and like themselves. Indeed in this main part of religion, a true notion of God, his nature, his attributes, his method of providence, their doctrine is very peccant, representing him, in his nature and actions, very unworthily. Their descriptions concerning the state of men after death, (that main and principal part of religion, which gives life and vigour to the rest,) whence can we better deduce its original, than from the pagan notions or stories of Elysium and Hades? what better pattern can we find, whence that paradise of corporeal delight, or rather of brutish sensuality, should be transcribed, which any man sees how poor an encouragement it is, how unworthy a reward, to virtue; yea, how much it is apt to de-

tract from, to discourage all performances of reason SERM.
and honesty? The like we might say of the punishments (which in due correspondence to the rewards they propound) they only or chiefly inflict upon the body; the main part, it seems, of which a Mahometan man consists. And must he not be very stupid, who can suffer himself to be persuaded, that such conceits (conceits favourable indeed to pleasure, and indulgent to the flesh, but contrary to virtue, prejudicial to the spirit and reason of man) should come from the God of wisdom and holiness? Further, how Mahomet was inspired, his stories alone will evince; stories patched up out of old histories corrupted, mangled, and transplaced; interlarded with fabulous legends, contrary to all probable records of history, (the names, places, times, and all the circumstances whereof he most unskilfully changes and confounds,) yea repugnant to the nature and possibility of things; so that in a manner every tale he tells is an evident argument of an ignorant and an impudent impostor; and he that so blunders and falsifies about matters of fact, who will trust him in matters of right and reason? which things, if it were worth the while, might by various instances be shewed; and you may every where receive satisfaction therein. The like might be said concerning its multitude of silly ceremonies, grounded on no reasonable design, nor subservient to any purpose of virtue; the institution whereof no man therefore, without injury to the divine wisdom, can impute thereto. But I shall only add two further considerations upon this matter: one, that whatever is good or plausible in this religion, (such as are some precepts of justice and charity, although these con-

XIV.

SERM. fined among themselves,) may reasonably be supposed taken from Christianity, which being senior in standing, may (in points wherein both agree) well go for the mistress; and however, that, upon the score of such doctrines or laws, we have no reason to think this religion came from God; for why should he reveal that again, which in a larger extent, upon better grounds, with more advantage, he had declared before; which also then was commonly embraced and acknowledged? I also observe, that this religion, by its own free concessions, doth evidently destroy itself; for it admits Christianity once to have been a true doctrine, proceeding from and attested to by God: but Christianity did ever declare itself to be a general, perpetual, perfect, and immutable rule of faith and practice; that never any accessions thereto, any alterations thereof, ought to be made or admitted; that whatever spirit, coming after it, should offer to innovate, or pretend to new discoveries contrary to, or different from it, must be suspected of delusion, foretelling and fore-warning against such endeavours that should appear, as fallacious and mischievous: this, it appears, (by the writings of those who first planted Christianity, writings which no man in his wits can question to be theirs; being through a continual uninterrupted course of times, from the beginning, by general consent of both friends and adversaries, acknowledged and attested to as so; all characters within them imaginably proper for that purpose, confirming the same; as also by the current tradition of their disciples, immediate and mediate, extant in records unquestionable, and by all other means conceivable,) this, I say, it most plainly appears, was one grand

doctrine and pretence of Christianity at first, which SERM.
the Mahometans acknowledging originally true and XIV.
divine in the gross, must consequently grant itself
to be an imposture.

And thus much seems sufficient to demonstrate
that religion not to be of a divine extraction. I
shall next proceed to consider the pretences of Ju-
daism, and to shew that neither it was such a per-
fect revelation as we proved it probable God would
vouchsafe to make. But that shall be the subject
of another Discourse.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N XV.

OF THE IMPERFECTION OF THE JEWISH RELIGION.

EPH. i. 13.

*In whom ye also (trusted), having heard the word of truth,
the gospel of your salvation.*

SERM. THAT it is probable God should vouchsafe to mankind a full and clear declaration of his mind and will concerning their duty and their welfare, I did shew : that Paganism and Mahometanism, without reason and truth, did or does pretend thereto, I also briefly discoursed : I now proceed to examine the plea which Judaism puts in, and to make good that neither it is well grounded, (which, as the cause deserves, I shall do somewhat more largely.) The Jewish religion we acknowledge had its birth from the revelation and appointment of God ; its truth and its goodness we do not call in question : but yet looking into it, we shall find it in many respects defective, and wanting the conditions due to such a revelation as we require. For it was not universal, (neither being directed to, nor fitted for, the nature and needs of mankind;) it was not full and complete, it was not designed to be of perpetual obligation or use.

Heb. vii.
18, 19.

1. First, I say, this revelation was not general ; SERM. XV.
not directed to, or intended for to instruct and oblige mankind : itself expressly affirms so much ; the whole tenor and frame thereof shews it ; so do all the circumstances of its rise and progress. That it was intended peculiarly for that small nation, possessing a very inconsiderable portion of the earth ; distinguished, and indeed, as it were, concealed from the rest of mankind both on purpose and in effect ; for it so remained for many ages (till the Macedonian first, and afterward the Roman conquests opened the world, and disclosed them) hid in a solitary obscurity ; even so far as to scape the observation of the most inquisitive surveyors of the earth, the most curious searchers into the customs of all people, (as of Herodotus for instance, who, nicely describing the places and manners of the people all about them, could not discern them, and takes no notice of them, although for their peculiar manners otherwise most remarkable, and deserving his mention :) appears by express passages in their law and holy writings ; *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel; he hath not dealt so with any nation; and his judgments they have not known them.* It is plainly affirmed that God did make that discovery of his will and mind peculiarly to that people, and to no other ; *I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine,* saith God to the Jews ; *So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth,* saith Moses in his address to God ; *Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God; The Lord hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that*

Lev. xx. 26.
Exod. xxxiii. 16.
They were
not to mar-
ry, not to
trade, to
converse,
&c. Vid.
Grot. in
Evang. p.
130.

SERM. *are upon the face of the earth*, saith Moses to that
 XV. people : which passages (together with divers others
 Deut. vii. 6. of the same import) being used to engage and en-
 xiv. 2. courage a singular obedience, do plainly say, that
 God transacted with that people singly and sepa-
 rately from all other ; taking them on purpose, as
 it were, into a corner, at a good distance, and be-
 yond hearing of others, that he might there signify
 alone to them his pleasure, peculiarly concerning
 them. Yea to this purpose, of maintaining a dis-
 tance and distinction from the rest of mankind, di-
 vers of their laws were appointed ; as not only the
 nature of such laws doth imply, but words annexed
 Lev. xx. 24. to them sometimes express ; *I am the Lord your*
God, which have separated you from other people ;
ye shall therefore put difference between clean
beasts and unclean. Whence St. Paul calls their
 Eph. ii. 14. law μεσότοιχον φραγμοῦ, a *partition* wall, that fenced
 that nation, and severed it from others ; and an en-
 mity, being framed to set them in distance and va-
 riance from the rest of men. That whole business
 also of this constitution is frequently styled a co-
 Deut. iv. 13. venant, *made*, not between God and mankind, but
 xxix. 14, &c. between God and that single nation ; a covenant
 in formal terms mentioning them, and them only ;
 sealing with marks and characters peculiar to them ;
 requiring conditions and duties possible or proper
 only for them to perform ; exhibiting promises only
 suitable to them ; propounding rewards which they
 only were capable to receive, and punishments which
 Deut. iv. 1. they only could undergo. *Hear, O Israel,* is the
 v. 1. vi. 3, &c. usual style, according to which those laws are di-
 Ps. lxxxi. 8. rected ; *I am the Lord thy God, which brought*
thee out of the land of Egypt, is the introduction

to the Decalogue itself, (which among all parts of SERM. that law looks fairest toward a general importance XV. and obligation ; which yet is so specially directed, and is indeed peculiarly called the covenant between God and that people ; viz. *synecdochically*, as being ^{Deut. iv. 13.} the principal part directive of their duty.) In the ^{Exod. xxxiv. 28.} body of the laws itself, there is often made a distinction between them who were bound to observe it, and others that were not ; between *brethren* and ^{Deut. xvii. 15. i. 16.} *strangers* ; between *Hebrews* and *aliens* ; with ^{Exod. xxv. 46.} duties suited and limited in regard to that distinction, (as in the cases of *remitting debts, releasing* ^{Deut. xv. 3, 12.} *servants, exacting use,* and the like :) there are en-^{Lev. xxv. 47, &c.} joined duties, which others could not properly or de-^{Deut. xvi. 16.} cently perform ; such as observation of feasts in com-^{xiv. 21, &c.} memoration and thankfulness for mercies vouchsafed ^{Exod. xxiii. 19, &c.} to that nation ; as also others which could not be observed by all men with any possibility or convenience ; such as those of repairing thrice a year to one certain place, established for God's worship ; of bringing tithes and oblations thither, and the like ; neither was the number of Priests and Levites, set apart for God's service, proportioned otherwise, than in respect to that one people. The encouragements also and rewards promised to obedience do incomunicably pertain to them, as also the discouragements from, and punishments for, disobedience ; a long and prosperous enjoyment of the land of Canaan was the meed set before them, if they should obey and make good their part of the covenant ; a dispossession thereof, or affliction in it, was the punishment threatened, if they should presume to disobey and violate those engagements ; *Ye shall walk in* ^{Deut. v. 33.} *all the laws, which the Lord your God hath com-* ^{vi. 3, &c.} ^{Moses novus ritus,}

SERM. *manded you ; that ye may live, and that it may be*

XV. *well with you ; and that ye may prolong your days*

~~contrarios~~ *in the land which ye possess. Hear therefore, O*
~~que cæteris~~ *Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well*
~~mortalibus~~ *with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as*
indidit.

Tac. 5. *Cætera in-*
stituta sim-
istra, feeda
privatae
valuere. *the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee,*

in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Such were the promises exciting to obedience ; and the threatenings deterring from disobedience were answerable, as every where in their law and story is visible.

I may also hereto add, that as the laws and rites of this religion were designed only for this people, as they did only agree to their circumstances ; so they were only suited to their inclinations and their capacities ; their inclinations, which were very stubborn and perverse ; their capacities, which were very low and gross, as their own prophets do upon many occasions affirm and complain ; being dissentaneous and repugnant to the common humour and genius of mankind : so experience discovered them to be, when they became more apparent and observable ; *Judeorum mos absurdus, sordidusque* ; (The *Jewish way of life is uncouth and sordid*, was Tacitus his censure ; *Hist. v. 5.*) and, They run counter to all men, was St. Paul's imputation on that people, 1 Thess. ii. 15 ; to which the general conceit of men concerning them did agree ; so little plausible or probable was their way, so liable to dislike and contempt : which argues it unfit to be commended by the God of wisdom to the generality of mankind.

By which and many other like considerations obvious enough may appear, that this dispensation was not (either according to its nature or in its design)

general, or such as respected the main body of mankind, but rather very particular and restrained ; designedly restrained to the obligation and use of one place or people, if compared to the world of men, inconsiderably narrow and small ; (the fewest of all people God himself says they were.) That, in fine, Deut. vii. 7. this constitution had only the nature of a municipal law, imposing burdens and indulging privileges upon one city or territory ; not of a common civil sanction, established for the obligation, use, and benefit of the whole commonwealth, or empire subject to the Almighty King.

It is not therefore in reason to be taken for such a revelation, as we argued needful for us, and to be expected from him, *who*, as the Psalmist, as reason, as experience tells us, *is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works* ; from him, who is the common Father of all, and, as St. Paul expresseth it, *hath made of one blood τὸν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων*, Acts xvii. 26. *the whole nation and commonwealth of mankind* ; from him, who cannot be in affection anywise fond or partial, a respecter of persons or of nations, as St. Paul in the second to the Romans, and St. Peter in the Acts also implies. From him, who is not only the Maker, but, as our apostle also styles him, *the Saviour of all men* ; and, as even the Hebrew Wise Acts x. 34. 1 Tim. iv. 10. ii. 4. Wisd. vi. 7. 11, 23, &c. 2 Pet. iii. 9. Man asserts, *careth for all alike* ; being *desirous that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth* ; *not willing that any should perish, but that all men should come to repentance*. From him, who is not only φιλεβραῖος, or φιλέλλην, (a lover of Jews, or of Greeks;) but φιλάνθρωπος, Tit. iii. 4. Wisd. xi. 26. *a lover of men* ; and φιλόψυχος, *a lover of souls* ; who, lastly, *is not the God of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles*. Rom. iii. 29.

SERM. tiles also, as St. Paul urges this argument; and as
 XV. also the reason of the thing and the voice of nature
 doth declare: from this God, I say, so disposed, so
 related toward us all, so equally concerned in regard
 to us; so impartial in his affection, so unconfined in
 his bounty; we should have reason to expect rather
 no revelation at all, than one so scant, and pinched
 in such narrow bounds; so ill proportioned to the
 glory due to himself, to the need and benefit of man-
 kind. We cannot reasonably imagine that he should
 contract the effects of his goodness, or the manifesta-
 tions of his glory, to so slender a parcel of mankind,
 Deut. ix. 4. (no better qualified, no more deserving such special
 regard, than the rest; as himself, to repress their
 Matt. v. 45. fond conceits, and probably in way of anticipation, to
 intimate his design of further extending that favour
 in due season to others, who might pretend thereto
 with as much right and reason as themselves, doth
 sometime declare.) That he, who hath freely dis-
 pensed the influences of sun and stars to all alike,
 should cause the light of his heavenly truth to shine,
 as it were, but into one small closet of his spacious
 house; leaving all the rest, so many stately rooms
 thereof, encompassed with shades of ignorance and
 error; that he should pour down the showers of his
 blessings spiritual (otherwise than he hath done those
 natural) upon one only scarce discernible spot of
 ground; letting all the world beside (like a desert
 of sand) lie parched with drought, overspread with
 desolation and barrenness.

This revelation therefore was not in this respect
 sufficient; wanting in its nature and design that
 due condition of generality and amplitude*. But,

* Επὶ τῇς παλαιᾶς ὁ νόμος ἔκειτο, ὃτε οὐ πολλὴ ἀριστηγες πολυτείας ἡ ἀκρί-

2. Further; As this revelation was particular, so S.E.R.M. was it also partial; as God did not by it speak his mind to all, so did he not therein speak out all his mind. Our apostle to the Hebrews chargeth it with blameableness; (*εἰ πρώτη ἦν ἀμεμπτος, if the first covenant had been blameless;*) with imperfection, with weakness, with improfitaleness, (*ἀδέτησις μὲν γὰρ γίνεται προσαγούσῃς ἐντολῆς διὰ τὸ αὐτῆς ἀσθενὲς καὶ ἀνωφελέσ· οὐδὲν Gal. iii. 21. γὰρ ἐτελείωσεν ὁ νόμος· There is made an abolition of the precedent commandment for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof: for the law made nothing perfect;*) he means all this in degree, and in comparison to what was possible, and in some respects needful. Which charge may be easily made good, (*a priori,*) considering both the parts thereof which direct, and those which excite to practice; together with the means and aids enabling and facilitating obedience to the laws or rules enjoined; also, (*a posteriori,*) if we regard the fruits and effects thereof. Surveying first, I say, the directive part, we may observe both a redundancy in things circumstantial or exterior, and a defectiveness in things substantial and interior: there be ritual institutions in vast number very nicely described and strongly pressed; the observation of times and places, the distinction of meats and of habits, (*touch not, taste not, handle not,*) corporeal cleansings and purgations; modalities of exterior performance in sacrifices and oblations, those *δικαιώματα σarkos*, (justifications of the mere flesh, that only concerned the body or outward man, and could not perfect the observer's conscience; could

βεια, ὅτε εἰσαγαγεῖ τοῦ θείου ἥρα, ὅτε παιδικά τὰ παραγγέλματα, ὅτε τὸ γάλα, ὅτε ὁ παιδαγαγός, ὅτε ὁ λύχνος, ὅτε ὁ τύπος, καὶ ἡ σκιά. Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 44.

S E R M. neither satisfy or edify his mind and inward man,) XV. we see with extreme punctuality prescribed and enjoined, some of them under very heavy penalties, (of utter extermination and excision.) While moral duties (duties of justice and charity, yea of temperance and sobriety itself) and spiritual devotions (so exceedingly more agreeable to rational nature, and which could not but be much more pleasing to God) were more sparingly delivered in precept, less clearly explained, not so fully urged with rational inducements, nor in a due proportion guarded with rewards. Many things were plainly permitted, or tacitly connived at, (as polygamy and divorce, some kinds of retaliation, cursing, revenge; some degrees of uncharitableness,) which even natural reason dislikes, or condemns. So faulty was that dispensation, as to the part thereof directive of life; and it was no less in that part, which promotes and secures good practice, by applying fit excitements to obedience, and fit restraints from disobedience; rightly managing those great instruments and springs of human activity, natural courage, hope, and fear. Nothing so damps men's alacrity in endeavour, as desperation or diffidence of good success; nothing so quickens it, as a confidence or strong presumption thereof: and how then could they be very earnest in endeavours to please God, who were not assured of (yea, had so much reason to diffide in) God's placability and readiness, upon repentance, to forgive sins wilfully and presumptuously committed, such as no man surely lives altogether free from? The not opening a door of mercy seems discouraging and apt to slacken performance of duty; what was then the shutting it up close, the bolting it with that iron bar, *Cursed is*

he that abides not in all things written in this law SERM.
to do them; which at least will exclude assurance, XV.
will quash the hopes of mercy; will consequently Gal. iii. 10.
enervate the sinews of care and industry in serving
God. Neither were the rewards of either kind
(those that spurred to obedience, those that stopped
from disobedience) in measure or in kind such as the
reason of things doth afford and require. ^bThey were
only temporal, and chiefly corporeal or sensible; such
as belonged to the outward state of this transitory
life, which neither can deserve much regard, nor are
apt to have great efficacy: for who will in effect,
why should any man in reason, highly value the ac-
commodations of this short and uncertain life? who
will, who should be, greatly terrified with the in-
conveniences thereof? whom, probably, would such
considerations sufficiently animate to encounter and
sustain the perils, the difficulties, the troubles, and the
disgraces, to which often the practice of virtue is
exposed? whom would they guard from the en-
chantments of pleasure, profit, and honour, alluring
men to sin? the pleasures of sense, how improper
an encouragement, how unworthy a recompense are
they for the labours and achievements of virtue!
incomparably better surely, more worthy of regard,
and more effectual upon man's reason, more apt to
produce and to promote real virtue and hearty piety,
are the rewards concerning the future state of our
immortal soul; which yet it is a question whether
that law doth ever mention; it is plain it doth not

^b Οτε πάντα ἦν σαρκικὰ, καὶ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ λόγος οὐδεῖς. Chrys. tom. vi.
Or. 98.

Περὶ οὐρανίων οὐδέποτε λόγος ἦν, οὐδὲ μελλόντων μημένη, &c. Chrys. ad
Olymp. β'. p. 60. Vid. tom. vii. p. 16.

SERM. clearly propound and apply them. Indeed as to evident discovery concerning the immortality of man's soul, or the future state, so material a point of religion, of so grand moment and influence upon practice, even the Gentile theology, assisted by ancient common tradition, seems to have outgone the Jewish, grounding upon their revealed law; the pagan priests more expressly taught, more frequently inculcated arguments drawn from thence, than the Hebrew prophets; a plain instance and argument of the imperfection of this religion.

I subjoin, God's not thereby (in an ordinary certain way, according to any pact or promise) affording or exhibiting such interior influences of grace upon the minds of men, as, considering the natural frailty, blindness, and impotency of men, appears necessary to render them obedient to the rules of duty, to guide them in the ways of truth and goodness, to free them from error and sin, to shield and animate them against temptation; is a main defect in that religion; apt to breed fear in the onset upon duty, to nourish doubt in the performance thereof, to settle despair upon a fall or defeat. It presented to men's eyes the obligation to duty, the difficulty thereof, the danger of transgressing it, but did not openly represent the means requisite to perform it. And what can be more discouraging or discomforting, than to see oneself, upon great peril and penalty, obliged to that, which is apparently very hard, or, considering his strength, impossible, no help or support being visible? especially joining the consideration before touched, that no evasion by pardon, no rise by repentance doth appear. Whence we may well infer, that indeed, in effect, this dispensation

was what St. Paul calls it, *διακονία θανάτου*, and *διακονία* SERM.
κατακρίσεως, a ministry of death and condemnation; XV.
a subjection to a curse; a killing letter; bearing ^{2 Cor. iii.} nothing less in the looks and language thereof, than ^{7, 9.} Gal. iii. 10.
certain death and unavoidable ruin; a lying under ^{2 Cor. iii. 6.} insupportable slavery, both to the guilt and punishment
of sin. *If thou doest ill, sin lieth at the door.*

Neither in discoursing thus do we lay any mis- Gen. iv. 7.
beseeming imputation upon God, the author of that religion; the making so imperfect a revelation no-wise being disagreeable to his wisdom, his goodness, or his justice. As for a time he might withhold the declaration of his mind to all mankind, so might he, upon the same or like grounds of wise counsel, forbear to declare some part thereof to that people: no special reason appears that could oblige, that might induce him not to be reserved, as well in part to these few men, as in whole to those, all the rest of men; yea, there be good reasons assignable, why the divine wisdom should be then so sparing of its mind, why God should only shew his back parts, as it were, to Moses, and *not let him see his face*; not discover all of his nature and of his pleasure to him; why then he should seem to delight in, to lay so much stress on those carnal and ceremonious observances; why he should forbear to exact that height of spiritual duty, and not draw men to compliance with the best motives of pure reason. A dawning of light perhaps more became that morning of times than a meridian brightness; that infancy of the world was not, it may be, ripe for a more deep and perfect instruction; that nation, however, to whose state, to whose disposition and capacity those laws and insti-

SER.M. tutions were adapted, was very unfit for the highest
 XV. and hardest lessons. For a nation it was (as from infallible hands we have it) not wise, or considerate; not grave, or constant; not meek, or pliable; but a very stupid and heady, a very fickle and humourous, a very froward and stubborn generation of men;

^{Deut. xxxii. 28.} *They are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding,* was said of them at first by ^{v. 4.} Neh. ix. him who delivered their law, or rather by God himself ^{Iса. xlvi. 4.} who enjoined it: and, *I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; I have even from the beginning declared it to thee,* saith the prophet concerning *the house of Jacob;* alluding, it seems, to those many

^{Deut. xxxi. 27.} *passages in the law, where they are termed a stiff-necked people:* uncapable thence both of the finest notions and the more rigorous precepts; like children, by reason of the grossness of their apprehension, and the unruliness of their passion, they were not *οἰκεῖοι ἀκροαταὶ, proper auditors,* of a more pure and accurate discipline; wherefore as such the divine wisdom and goodness was pleased to deal with them; dispensing with the infirmities of their age, condescending to the meanness of their capacities, feeding them with milk, alluring them with petty shows, scaring them with frightful appearances, indulging them innocent trifles, pastimes, and sports; so tempering his ordinances as might best serve to keep them in good humour; to draw and entice them easily unto somewhat good, to curb and restrain them from mischief. Whence St. Paul calls those ^{Gal. iv. 9, 3.} institutions with good reason *elements;* (*poor and mean elements, and elements of the world; rudiments of knowledge and discipline,* suited to the capacity

of the first age, and the meanest rank ; such as vulgar and silly people were fit to learn, and able to practise;) with good reason he calls the law a *pedagogue*, that by instilling into those *νήπιοι*, (those infants, or little children, so also he terms them,) some imperfect notions of truth ; by keeping them in some good order, did prepare them for a higher instruction, did predispose them toward a better course of life. Indeed, we may easily conceive that such variety of superficial formalities might well agree to childish and plebeian fancies ; but to men of somewhat elevated minds, and well improved reason ; of sound judgment, and large experience ; who had tasted, and could relish rational entertainments, (and such in some measure and comparatively are men generally born and brought up in countries and places where civility hath obtained ; at least they are capable of being so, fit means being used to render them so,) they must needs be insipid and disgusting. In the study of truth and practice of virtue, there are alluring beauties and sweetesses ; which it cannot but displease him, who hath seen and felt them, to be diverted from, by an obligation to attend so precisely upon such an abundance of petty, circumstantial, exterior observances ; to be forced, I say, to chew such husks of things, to him, who thereby must neglect so delicious kernels, cannot but be grievous and irksome. Wiser men are never much affected with laborious and tedious pomps ; they are designed always to amuse children, and the common sort. I add, that this dispensation was suited not only to the childish fancy, but to the slavish spirit of that people ; who, having in them little of ingenuity, or willingness freely to do good, would be apt

SERM.
XV.Gal. iii. 24.
iv. 9.

SERM. to wax not only dronish and lazy, but sturdy and
 XV. insolent, had they not been kept under and inured
 to something of burden and toil. Such all wise men
 know to be the proper course of managing people
 of slavish temper; but toward men of a disposition
 more ingenuous, tractable, and free, such as com-
 monly men civilized and well governed are or may
 become, such a proceeding were incongruous; they
 will either refuse to undergo such unnecessary bur-
 dens, or bear them unwillingly; their obedience will
 be none, or lame, or unkindly and heartless. God
 therefore dealt according to wisdom with the Jews,
 when he imposed such burdens upon their shoulders,
 when he pinched their stiff necks with such yokes,
 when he detained them in such fetters; so they
 were, and so they are truly called by our apostles;

Acts xv. 10. 28. burdens intolerably heavy; yokes very galling and
Gal. v. 1. iii. 23. vexatious; fetters very strait and grievous; which
 they reasonably therefore reckon it a very valuable
 privilege and benefit, purchased by our Saviour for
 us, to be loosed from. But such a dispensation could
 not be convenient for the rational nature in com-
 mon, and for perpetuity: it neither becomes God
 himself, who will not without need or profit vex his
 creatures; who cannot be fully satisfied with per-
 formances of so mean a sort; who necessarily doth
 affect services of a more excellent nature and im-
 portance; (those spiritual services of love, reverence,
 and gratitude; of purity, righteousness, and good-
 ness.) It doth not suit man, not being apt to per-
 fect his nature, not being able to satisfy his mind.
 As he, by the improvement and use of his reason,
 will easily discern the small worth of such perform-
 ances, so will he not readily comply with them with-

out regret; but will soon apprehend the matter to SERM. be indeed, as St. Paul represents it, that an obligation to such rites is *a bond against us*, (*ἔξαλεῖψας τὸ Coloss. ii. καθ ἡμῶν χειρόγραφον τοῖς δόγμασιν, δὲ ἣν ἵπτεντίον ἡμῶν,*)^{14.} which in reason he may expect to be wiped out and *cancelled*; that a law consisting of such precepts hath an *enmity*, or repugnance to his nature; that such a dispensation is a *pupillage*, and a *slavery*, Gal. iii. 24. which he earnestly must desire to be redeemed and ^{iv. 1, 3, 5.}
&c. mancipiated from.

Thus doth this revelation upon many respects, grounded on the very intrinsic nature thereof, appear partial and imperfect; and consequently not such as that which we reasonably may expect from the divine wisdom and goodness.

It is true, which some may deem an objection against our discourse, but I should rather take for a good confirmation thereof, that God did afterward annex some labels, as it were, to this deed; that he imparted by degrees further manifestations of light and grace to that people, by the instructions, and by the exemplary practices of prophets and holy men raised up among them by his especial instinct and order; in a manner and upon occasions extraordinary. The prophets frequently declared, that God had not much delight in those ceremonious observances; nor would accept them otherwise than as proceeding from good dispositions of mind, and as accompanied with practices of moral duty and more spiritual piety: that he chiefly did require of them hearty reverence toward himself, and submission to his will; strict justice, and tender charity toward their neighbours; meekness and patience in their behaviour; temperance and sobriety in all their con-

Isa. lxvi. 3.
i. 11, 12,
13, &c.
Mic. vi. 7.
Hos. vi. 6.
Psal. i. 8, 9,
&c. li. 16.
i. 14. li. 6,
17.
Isa. i. 16,
17. lviii. 6.
Mic. vi. 8.
Hos. vi. 6.
Psal. cxxx.
3, 4.
Isa. i. 18.
lv. 7.
Ezek. xviii.
21. xxxiii.
12.

SERM. versation. By them also he discovered more of his
XV. gracious disposition, and of his merciful intentions
toward them ; that he would not be extremely rigorous
in punishing the transgressions of his law ; that
he would not refuse pardon to the most grievous
sins, not remain irreconcilable toward the most hei-
nous offenders, upon their sincere repentance and
amendment of life. By the practices of holy men
he also shewed, that the rigour of that ceremonious
law was mitigable ; that in some cases its obligation
^{Matt. xii. 3.} might be relaxed, and its observance dispensed with ;
^{Ps. li. 6, 17.} that a service more refined and rational was espe-
cially acceptable to God ; that he loved a purer de-
votion, a perfecter righteousness, a higher charity
than such as the letter of their law prescribed. By
them also he intimated, which their devotions plainly
infer, that he not only exacted such duties, but was
ready to afford them his assistance to the perform-
ing them ; by teaching and admonishing them with-
in ; enlightening their minds, and inflaming their
affections ; directing, exciting, and quickening them
to obedience. Thus did that morning of divine
knowledge, from the first dawning, by degrees grow
more lightsome ; yet never arrived to a perfect day-
light ; the shadows were not quite dispersed ; the
whole horizon of heavenly truth was not disclosed
thereby. Even those arbitrary and extraordinary
dispensations of further instruction are so many good
arguments, that God did not primarily intend the
Jewish law for a complete delivery of his mind ; his
reserving so much to be upon occasion detected, im-
plied that more still might rest behind ; accordingly,
as indeed we see, that the future state, and immor-
tality itself, was not by the prophets fully brought

to light ; that the better covenant, established upon SERM.
better assurances, was not yet revealed ; that all XV.
means requisite for the glory of God, for the good ^{Heb. viii. 6.}
of man, were not thoroughly provided for. ^{xi. 13, 40.}

Of which conclusion we shall add this one further probation, that Judaism did not serve, in effect, sufficiently to better men's lives ; to qualify a competent number of men for God's favour, or for their own happiness ; by disposing their minds to any tolerable degree of true sanctity, piety, and righteousness acceptable to God, profitable to human society, perfective of man's nature. It is a point that St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans insisteth much upon, and excellently applies to this same purpose. The Jews were highly conceited of their way, scorning the rest of men as altogether ignorant of God's will, and uncapable of his favour ; but St. Paul represses their arrogance, by shewing the difference was not so great, as they imagined, between them and others, not even in those respects ; for that the special revelation, which they were so proud of, had ^{Rom. ii.} not produced effects considerably better in them, than the light of reason and the law of nature (means so despicable in their esteem) had brought forth in others ; which charge being made good, it is evident they had no reason to prize their way so much ; or to confide therein, as perfect ; as thoroughly, in the best manner, and in reasonable measure sufficient to qualify them for God's favour, or to bring them into a state of happiness ; yea, it is plain, upon that supposition, in some respects their way had the disadvantage, and made their condition worse than that of other men ; rendering their faults more grievous and inexcusable, more provoking God's displeasure

SERM. against them ; especially seeing, upon the tenor of
 XV. their religion, they had scarce any better ground to presume of pardon or impunity, than other men had from instincts of nature, from rational conjecture. Now that such a charge upon them is no slander, we need no other probations than what the continual stream of their own histories doth represent concerning their manners ; than the many full and plain testimonies of their own prophets concerning them ; than the extreme punishments by divine justice inflicted upon them ; than the common reputation they have continually had among men, grounded upon experience. What is their history but one continued tragedy, as it were, setting out the various strange rebellions and apostasies of that people, with the miserable consequences proceeding from them ? What do their prophetical writings contain beside pathetical expostulations, severe reproofs, dreadful combinations of judgment upon them, for their prodigious impieties, iniquities, and lewdnesses ; general in extension over all persons, excessive in degree, by no means curable or corrigible ? *Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem,* (Jerusalem, that place of universal concourse, the heart of that nation, the special seat and sanctuary of their religion,) *see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it,* says Jeremiah, v. 1. *There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, (of Jerusalem,) like a roaring lion ravening the prey; her priests have violated my law, and have profaned my holy things; her princes are like wolves; the people of the land have used oppression and*

exercised robbery: and I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none, saith Ezekiel: and the rest frequently harp upon the same thing. But these prophets, you will say, lived in unhappy times; so circumstantiated, that no religion could have much prevailed upon men's minds and lives; such as make every religion liable to the same exceptions: well, but Isaiah, one would think, lived in better times; for how many better kings had that nation, that more strictly practised or earnestly promoted piety, than Hezekiah? yet, *A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquities, a seed of evil doers, were they, it seems, even then; the land was defiled under the inhabitants thereof; the whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot even to the head there was no soundness in the body of that nation.* Yea, when did that religion flourish in greater vigour and strength, when had it more advantage of exerting its best virtue, than in the peaceful and prosperous times of that great and mighty, that good and zealously pious prince, king David? yet, even in his reign, according to his own observation and testimony, *they were, generally, corrupt, and did abominable works; they all were gone aside, and were altogether become filthy; there was none that did good, no not one.* But we need not urge particular instances, since we have it so often affirmed in gross, that the manners of that people, from first to last, were constantly naught and offensive to God: *The children of Israel, and the children of Judah,* saith God himself³⁰ in Jeremiah, *have only done evil before me from*

SERM.
XV.

Ps. xiv. 53.

Is- Jer. xxxii.

SERM. *their youth.* And again; *Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto*

Jer. vii. 25. this day, I have even sent you all my servants the xvi. 12. xi. 7. prophets, daily rising up early and sending them;

yet they hearkened not unto me. The law, although by extraordinary persons, in fittest opportunities, with utmost vehemence and diligence inculcated and urged upon them, proved continually ineffectual to produce the fruits of piety and righteousness.

Ezra ix. 7. The same you may see confessed by Ezra; and not only acknowledged, but evidently demonstrated by

Neh. ix. Nehemiah, in a punctual narration, deduced from the beginning to his time, in the ninth chapter of that book. Again; The heavy calamities by divine justice so often inflicted, so long continued upon them; and, at last, God's so visible utter dereliction and disowning them, do also sufficiently declare what their deserts, and what their qualities have been; as also what good may ever be expected from them. For as God never punishes grievously without a proportionate cause, so he never quite deserts, but in a desperate case, when no competent emendation may be expected. He is not wont to lop off the branches, but when they grow dead and barren; he never cuts down the tree, while there is any hope of fruit. This providence therefore toward that people shews, that in God's esteem that law is to be laid aside, as an instrument grown useless, and unfit for his purposes; unfit to serve his glory, to further men's good.

I add; that through all course of times their manners have not procured in a manner from any men any good-will or respect; but indeed the common dislike, contempt, and hatred of men: they have always (since well known and observed in the world)

been reputed a sort of people not only above all men SERM.
vain and superstitious, addicted to fond conceits and XV.
fabulous stories, but extremely proud and arrogant,
churlish and sour, ill-natured and false-hearted to-
ward all men; not good or kind, yea not so much
as just or true, toward any but themselves;

(Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti;
Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos;

Juv. Sat. xiv.

Apud ipsos fides obstinata, misericordia in promptu, sed adversus omnes alios hostile odium.)

Tac. v. p.
621. Vid.
Grot. de
Jure B.
lib. ii. 15. 9.

Such are the obvious characters of them, such were their humours noted to be; humours not only implausible, but really blameable, deservedly offensive and odious; being contrary to the common sense, to the natural ingenuity of man. They have been long, as we see them now to be, partly for the vanity of their conceits, partly for the baseness of their minds and manners, and partly also for the wretchedness of their condition, the scorn and obloquy of all nations.

Now the tree, which hath always bore such fruits, (so unsavoury, so unwholesome,) we have no reason to admire, to esteem excellent and perfect. It might be good for those times, when men willingly did feed on acorns, on crabs, on bramble-berries; but cannot so well serve now, when higher improvements of reason, when philosophy and learning, by a general influence upon the world, have prepared the palates of men to relish, their stomachs to digest, more delicious and more wholesome fare. But,

3. I proceed to shew the third defect, which I at first observed in this religion, that it was not de-

SERM. signed for perpetual obligation and use. (As it was
XV. particular in respect of the persons to whom it was directed, whom it obliged; as it was partial and incomplete in its frame, so it was, according to its design, temporary and mutable.) This conclusion we might infer from what hath been said concerning the narrow extent, and concerning the intrinsic imperfection thereof; for supposing a new general and perfect revelation made to mankind, (such as we asserted probably should be,) that would naturally swallow and void those which are particular and imperfect; as comprehending them, it would render them useless; as supplying the defects, correcting the defaults, or removing, paring away the superfluities of them, it would discover them unfit for continuance. As rivers run into the sea, as shadows flee before the sun, so these small and shallow, these dusky and faint revelations would discharge themselves into, would vanish before a complete and universal one. Nothing in nature or in providence that is scant, or defectuous, can be stable and lasting. Thus, I say, is this a conclusion, a consequence of those which preceded; but we have another more convincing sort of evidence to prove it by, (most valid *ad homines*,) even by many pregnant intimations; yea many express remonstrances and predictions, that God did intend in due time to introduce a great change in affairs of this kind; to refine and reform the state of things; to break open those enclosures, and to remove those bars of separation; to enlarge the bounds of his dominion, and to receive all nations into the fold of his most special care and love. In fine, that he would dispense a general full revelation of his mind and will, of his grace and fa-

Mal. iii. 1, 3.
Heb. ix. 10.

vour to mankind ; such as should not be consistent SERM. with that particular and partial law, such as implies XV. a disannulling thereof for obligation, and disabling it for use. The holy writings of that people acquaint us, that God intended *to raise up another* ^{Deut. xviii.} *Prophet* (for extraordinariness and eminency) *like* ^{15, 18.} *Acts iii. 23.* *to Moses, which should have words by God put into his mouth*; (new words surely, new revelations from God; for why should he with that solemnity be sent to utter stale matters? whom they should, upon peril of their lives and welfare, be particularly obliged to hearken (that is, to yield attention and obedience) unto. That *the days should come, when* ^{Jer. xxxi.} *the Lord would make a new covenant with the* ^{31.} *house of Israel*, different from that which he made with their fathers after their delivery from Egypt; not to be written upon stones, but impressed upon men's hearts; in regard to which passage we may with the apostle to the Hebrews well argue; *If the* ^{Heb. viii.} *first had been faultless,* and designed to abide in ^{7, 13.} force, *there would have been no place found for the second;* and that, by speaking of a new covenant, he antiquated, or declared his intention to antiquate, the old one.

That time should be, when they should say no ^{Jer. iii. 16.} *more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord; neither should it come to mind, neither should they remember it, neither should they visit it;* they are the words of the prophet Jeremiah, concerning better times to come; wherein God *should give them* ^{Jer. iii. 15.} *pastors according to his own heart, which should feed them with knowledge and understanding;* but in a way, it is evident, altogether different from the Jewish institution; without any regard to the ark

S E R M. of their covenant, that seat and emblem of God's
 XV. especial presence among them.

Psal. cx. 4. That *another priesthood* should infallibly (for God swore so much) be established, not *after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedek*; (not appointed to offer carnal sacrifices, but to impart spiritual benedictions.)

Isa. lxvi. 18, 21. That time should be, *when God would gather all nations and tongues, and they should come and see his glory*; and out of them *God would take* (that which the Mosaical constitution would not anywise permit) *for priests, and for Levites.*

Ps. cxxii. 13. That there should appear a *Zion*; a mountain seated above all mountains, (visible and conspicuous to all the world,) wherein God would place his perpetual residence, the seat of his worship, of his especial presence and influence, to *which all nations should flow*, or willingly resort, to learn God's will, and walk in his ways; which Zion could not be that literal one, long since desolated and disregarded; and which, however, did it stand in repute, could be no convenient receptacle, or resort, for all the world; it is surely another spiritual Zion, or mystical rock, which is prophesied of.

Isa. lxxv. 17. 22. *That God will create new heavens and a new earth*; (a thoroughly new world, or new state of things;) such as that the former should not be remembered, nor come into mind.

Joel ii. 28. That God would *pour his spirit* of prophecy upon all flesh; (although we see the prophetical spirit hath long deserted the Jewish nation, not so much as any pretence thereto remaining.) *That the earth should be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea*; (Judaism

surely is not this knowledge, which never did, nor SERM. is ever likely to fill the earth.) That *from the rising of the sun, to the going down thereof, God's name should be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense should be offered unto his name, and a pure offering.* (In every place incense, acceptable to God, should be offered; not only at Jerusalem, to which the Jewish service was confined.) That a time was *determined to finish transgression, and make an end of sins; to make a reconciliation for iniquity, and to introduce everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy; and to anoint the most Holy.*

That God would send him, so much needed and desired by all nations, to whom the gathering of the people should be; the Sun of righteousness, arising with salvation in his wings; the Redeemer that should come to Zion; the Messenger of the covenant, whom God would give for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritage; the righteous Branch, to be raised up unto David; to reign and prosper, executing judgment and justice in the earth; whose name should be called, The Lord our Righteousness; whom God would anoint to preach good tidings to the meek, and bind up the brokenhearted, &c. that is, in fine, God in due time would send the Messias, to enlighten the world with a perfect instruction; to reveal God's will, and declare his mercy to mankind; to erect a universal spiritual kingdom in the minds and hearts of men, reducing them to fuller knowledge and to better obedience of God. These places of scripture, to which many others might be added, do sufficiently evince that

XV.

Mal. i. 11.

Dan. ix. 24.

Hag. ii. 7.

Gen. xlvi.

io.

Mal. i. 3.

iv. 2.

Isa. lxx. 20.

xlii. 8.

lxi. 1.

Jer. xxiii.

5.

6.

Isa. lxi. 1.

SERM. the Mosaical dispensation was in the design thereof

XV. mutable and transitory ; that God intended, what

^{Heb. vii.}
^{18.} the apostle affirms effected by our Saviour, an abrogation of the precedent command for its weakness and unprofitableness.

Thus doth God's design concerning the abolition of this religion appear by verbal testimonies ; the same we see also declared by real effects : his providence hath made good his word ; he hath not only disengaged men from that religion, but hath manifestly discountenanced it ; yea, hath disabled even the most obstinate adherents in opinion and will thereto from the practice and exercise thereof, according to its primitive rules and prescriptions. Long is it (for above fifteen hundred years) since they, exiled from their ancient country, and scattered over the world, have wanted a place whither to resort, wherein to perform those most weighty parts of worship and service to God, oblation of sacrifices, incense and tithes ; their tribes being confounded, the distinction of priesthood and people seems taken away ; all the mysterious emblems of God's special presence, all the tokens of God's favour and endearment to them are embezzled and quite lost ; nothing is left substantial or solemn in their religion, which if they would they could put in practice : all that they retain of their ancient institution is the observation of some petty formalities, in matters of less importance ; which also they have so blended and corrupted with impure mixtures of their own device and forgery, false and impious opinions, ridiculous and uncouth ceremonies, idle and absurd stories, that we may justly suppose genuine Judaism nowhere to be found ; that it cannot be, nor is indeed any where, practised.

So that what reason shewed fit to be, what God SERM.
had declared should be, that experience doth attest XV.
to be done; the cessation and abolition of that way
of religion, both as to obligation and use.

So I pass over this second step of my intended Discourse: that no other religion, excepting Christianity, which hath been, or is in being, can reasonably pretend to have proceeded from God, as a universal, complete, and final declaration of his mind and will to mankind. Such as we argued it probable that so wise a God, so just a Lord, so gracious a Father would sometime afford to his poor miserable creatures and children, the sons of Adam.

I have two great steps yet to take: one, that Christianity is in itself a doctrine and law endued with the forementioned conditions; in all respects worthy to come from God, apt to promote his glory, and procure man's benefit. Another, that it *de facto* did proceed from God, was attested to by him, and established by his authority. Which propositions I shall hereafter, by God's grace, endeavour to prove.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N XVI.

OF THE EXCELLENCY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

1 Cor. ii. 6.

We speak wisdom to those which are perfect.

SERM. **T**HE meaning of these words, upon viewing the ^{1 Cor. iii. 1, 2.} context, and weighing the scope of St. Paul's discourse, I take to be in effect this; that however such parts of the Christian doctrine, which St. Paul discovered unto those whom he began to instruct therein, *the milk which he gave the babes in Christ to drink*, especially as propounded, proved, and persuaded in so plain and simple a manner, without advantages of subtile reasoning or elegant language, might seem to persons really ignorant, unskilful, and dull of apprehension, (although much conceited of their own knowledge, wit, and reach,) or to men prepossessed with contrary notions and corrupt affections, to be foolish and unreasonable: yet that the whole doctrine, such as it is in itself, being entirely disclosed unto *perfect men*, that is, to men of an adult and improved understanding, well disposed and ~~and~~ void of prejudic'd conceits, and cleansed

from vicious dispositions, would appear *wisdom*; SERM. wisdom, that is, not only exactly true, but highly XVI. important, and very well suited to the attainment of the best ends; even those ends, which it pretendeth to bring about, which are manifestly the most excellent that any knowledge can aim at; the glorifying of God, and salvation of man: this I suppose to be St. Paul's assertion here; and thereof it is my intent, by God's assistance, to endeavour now some declaration and proof, by representing briefly some peculiar excellencies and perfections of our religion; which may serve to evince the truth, and evidence the wisdom thereof; to make good, that indeed our religion well deserveth the privilege it doth claim of a divine extraction, that it is not an invention of man, but, as St. Paul calleth it, *the wisdom of God*, ^{1 Cor. iii. 7.} proceeding from no other author but the God of truth and wisdom. It is indeed a common subject, and so the best ever should be; it is always profitable, and now seasonable to inculcate it, for the confirmation of ourselves, and conviction of others, in this age of wavering and warping toward infidelity; wherefore, regarding more the real usefulness of the matter than the squeamish fancy of some auditors, I shall without scruple propound what my own meditation hath suggested about it.

1. The first excellency peculiar to the Christian ^{Matt. xi. 27.} doctrine I observe to be this; that it assigneth a — Neither knoweth ^{any man} the Father ^{save the} Son, and he ^{to whom-} soever the ^{Son will} reveal him. true, proper, and complete character or notion of God; (complete, I mean, not absolutely, but in respect to our condition and capacity;) such a notion as agreeth thoroughly with what the best reason dictateth, the works of nature declare, ancient tradition doth attest, and common experience doth in-

SERM. timate concerning God ; such a character as is apt
XVI. to breed highest love and reverence in men's hearts
toward him, to engage them in the strictest practice
of duty and obedience to him. It ascribeth unto
him all conceivable perfections of nature in the high-
est degree ; it asserteth unto him all his due rights
and prerogatives ; it commendeth and justifieth to
us all his actions and proceedings. For in his es-
sence it representeth him one, eternal, perfectly sim-
ple and pure, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent,
independent, impassible, and immutable ; as also, ac-
cording to his essential disposition of will and natu-
ral manner of acting, most absolute and free, most
good and benign, most holy and just, most veracious
and constant ; it acknowledgeth him the maker and
upholder of all beings, of what nature and what de-
gree soever ; both material and immaterial, visible
and invisible ; it attributeth to him supreme ma-
jesty and authority over all. It informeth us, that
he framed this visible world with especial regard to
our use and benefit ; that he preserveth it with the
same gracious respect ; that he governeth us with
a particular care and providence ; viewing all the
thoughts, and ordering all the actions of men to
good ends, general or particular. It declareth him
in his dealings with rational creatures very tender
and careful of their good, exceedingly beneficent and
merciful toward them ; compassionate of their evils,
placable for their offences, accessible and inclinable
to help them at their entreaty, or in their need ; yet
nowise fond or indulgent to them ; not enduring
them to proceed in perverse or wanton courses ; but
impartially just, and inflexibly severe toward all
iniquity. —ately pursued ; it, in short, describeth

him most amiable in his goodness, most terrible in SERM.
his justice, most glorious and venerable in all his XVI.
ways of providence: whatever perfections in essence,
state, or practice, either philosophers (by rational col-
lection from innate notions, or from contemplation
of natural effects, or upon observing occurrences in
human affairs) or other institutions from the relics of
primitive tradition, by politic reflection upon things,
from other fountains, or by other means whatever,
have by parts (imperfectly, obscurely, and faintly)
attributed to God, all those our religion, in a full,
clear, and peremptory manner, with advantage be-
yond what I can express, doth ascribe and assert
unto him; not intermixing therewith (as other doc-
trines and institutions may be observed to do) any
thing unworthy of him, or misbecoming him; ad-
joining nothing repugnant to that which natural
light discerneth or approveth; but shewing some-
what beyond what it can descry, concerning God's
incomprehensible nature and manner of subsistence,
his unsearchable counsels of wisdom, his admirable
methods of providence, whereby he hath designed to
commend his goodness to us, and to glorify his jus-
tice; which sorts of truths exceeding man's reach to
devise or comprehend as it becometh God (who so
far transcendeth us in wisdom and knowledge) to
reveal them; so they, wondrously conspiring with
the perfections of God otherwise discernible by us,
do argue or confirm the divinity of the doctrine,
which acquainteth us with them: for a doctrine,
how plausible soever, which should teach us nothing
about God, that by other means could not be found
out, and whose bottom common sense might not
~~fathom, there were no urgent cause why we should~~

SERM. derive it from heaven, or why we should not rather
XVI. deem it the invention of some witty or subtile man.

But such a doctrine as this, (which as it telleth us nothing about divine things that contradicteth reason, so it informeth us many things which no understanding of man had ever conceived, none can penetrate,) we may justly presume to come from a superior wisdom, we must at least avow it worthy of God; in the contrivances of man's wit or fancy about things of this nature, as in divers instances it hath happened, most probably many flaws and incongruities presently would have appeared; they would have clashed with themselves, or with the dictates of common reason: that, for instance, God should out of his own bosom send down his eternal Son to partake of our nature, and appear in our flesh, that with utmost advantage he might discover God's will and merciful intentions toward us, that he might set before us an exact pattern of good life; that by his obedience and patience he might expiate our sin, and reconcile God to mankind; that he might raise in us a hope of, and lead us in the way to, happiness; this indeed is a mystery, and a depth of wisdom, which we should never have thought of, nor can yet thoroughly sound by thinking, which we better may admire, than we can understand: but neither doth good reason disallow it, nor can disprove it; yea, good reason so far confirmeth it, as it cannot but admit it to import nothing but that which is plainly true and most credible, the immense goodness and justice of God; concerning which nothing ought to seem strange or uncouth to us, since even by the care expressed in matters of ordinary evidence divine goodness appeareth so unaccount-

ably vast and high, that upon consideration thereof SERM. worthily might Job and the Psalmist exclaim; *What XVI.*
is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and Job vii. 17.
that thou shouldest set thy heart upon him? Lord, Ps. cxliv. 3.
what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him?
or the son of man, that thou makest such account
of him?

Now thus to instil into the minds of men a right and worthy notion of God, is palpably a great excellency of any doctrine or religion: for beside that a true knowledge of God (even barely considered as in way of theory most perfective of our understanding, it being conversant upon the noblest object of contemplation) is in itself very desirable; and upon the same ground error in divine things is no small evil or defect; both these, such knowledge and such error respectively, are very considerable, as having a powerful influence upon action; for according to men's conceptions about God is their practice, religious and moral, very much regulated; if men conceive well of God, they will be guided and moved thereby to render him a worship and an obedience worthy of him, and acceptable to him; if they are ignorant of him, or mistake about him, they will accordingly perform services to him, or pretences of service, which shall neither become him nor please him; (God by such misconceptions being transformed into an idol, their religion will become vile or vain superstition.) And since all men apprehend the example of God a perfect rule of action, that they cannot do better than to resemble and imitate him, such as they conceive God to be, such in good measure they will endeavour to be themselves, both in their disposition and demeanour; whence infal-

Isa. lxvi. 3.

1. 13. 14.

Εὐλόγως

ταῖς μὲν

μορφῶσις

φυσίαις

ἰχθύν ταῖς

ταῖς διανο-

νεσίαις ἀναγ-

ην, ταῖς δι-

στρατείαις

ἀρισταῖς.

Clem.

Strom. viii.

(p. 511.)

SERM. libly the virtues and defects which lie in their notion will exert and diffuse themselves into their life.

2. A second great excellency peculiar to the Christian institution is this, that it faithfully informeth us concerning ourselves, concerning our nature, our original, our end, all our state, past, present, and final; points about which otherwise by no reason, no history, no experience, we could be well resolved or satisfied: it teacheth us that we consist of a frail mortal body, taken from the earth and fashioned by God's hand, and of an immortal spirit, derived from heaven, and breathed out of God's mouth; whereby we understand the dignity of our nature and nobleness of our descent, our near alliance and our great obligation to God; and consequently how it concerneth us to behave ourselves, both in regard to God and toward ourselves, in a manner answerable to such a relation, worthy of such an high birth and quality: it sheweth us, that we were originally designed by a voluntary obedience to glorify our Maker, and in so doing to partake of joy and felicity from him; that accordingly we were created in a state agreeable to those purposes, wherein we were fit to serve God, and capable thereby ever to continue happy: but that by our unworthy distrust and wilful disobedience we cast ourselves from thence, and lapsed into this wretched state of inward blindness, error, and disorder, of outward frailty, sorrow, and trouble: it acquainteth us further, how being thus estranged from God, and exposed to the effects of his just displeasure, we are yet again, by his exceeding mercy and favour, put into a capacity of recovering ourselves, of being re-

instituted in a condition happy far beyond that from SERM. which we fell, by returning unto God, and complying with his will declared unto us; as also how continuing obstinately in our degeneracy and disobedience we shall assuredly plunge ourselves deeper into an abyss of endless misery: it fully representeth unto us, what shall be our future state and final doom, how it shall be suited to our demeanours and deserts in this life; what a strict trial, what a severe judgment, all our actions (even our passant words and our secret thoughts) must hereafter undergo; and how, upon the result, we shall become either exceedingly happy or extremely miserable for ever. It is indeed this doctrine only, which fully resolveth us about this weighty inquiry, which hath so much perplexed all men, and with so much irresolution exercised philosophers, wherein the final end and happiness of man consisteth, and what is the way of attaining it; assuring us, that it consisteth not in any of these transitory things, nor in a confluence of them all, but in the favour and the enjoyment of God, with the blessings flowing thence; that this happiness is only by a sincere and constant obedience to God's holy laws, or by the practice of such a piety and such a virtue which this doctrine prescribeth, to be obtained. These most important truths, so useful both for the satisfaction of our minds, and the direction of our lives, this doctrine unfoldeth: I call them truths, and that really they are such even their harmony and consistence between themselves, their consonancy with inferences from all sorts of principles, which we can apply for learning of truth, with what about these matters reason collecteth, tradition reporteth, experience

SERM. doth imply, may well persuade us: for that man
XVI. was first made and constituted in a happy state; that he was for his misbehaviour detrued thence; that hence he is become so very prone to vice, and so much subject to pain; that our souls do abide after death; that after this life there shall be a reckoning and judgment, according to which good men (who here are often much afflicted) shall be rewarded with joy, and bad men (who commonly prosper here) shall be requited with pain, the wisest men, upon these grounds, always have surmised; and their rational conjectures our religion with a positive and express assertion doth establish. So great a light doth it afford (which is no small perfection thereof) to the knowledge of ourselves and our chief concernments, the objects, next to God and what concerneth him, best deserving our inquiry and information.

As ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God.

^{1.} 1 Thess. iv. 1.

3. It is a peculiar excellency of our religion, that it prescribeth an accurate rule of life, most congruous to reason, and suitable to our nature; most conducible to our welfare and our content; most apt to procure each man's private good, and to promote the public benefit of all; by the strict observance whereof we shall do what is worthy of ourselves and most becoming us; yea, shall advance our nature above itself into a resemblance of the divine nature; we shall do God right, and obtain his favour; we shall oblige and benefit men, acquiring withal good-will and good respect from them; we shall purchase to ourselves all the conveniences of a sober life, and all the comforts of a good conscience. For, if we first examine the precepts directive of our practice in relation to God, what can be more just, or comely, or

pleasant, or beneficial to us, than are those duties of SERM.
piety, which our religion doth enjoin? What can be
XVI.
more fit, than that we should most highly esteem
and honour him, who is most excellent? that we
should bear most hearty affection to him, who is in
himself most good, and most beneficial to us? that
we should have a most awful dread of him, who
is so infinitely powerful, holy, and just? that we
should be very grateful unto him from whom we
have received our being, with all the comforts and
conveniences thereof? that we should entirely trust
and hope in him, who can do what he will, and
will do whatever in reason we can expect from
his goodness, and can never fail to perform what
he hath promised? that we should render all obe-
dience and observance to him, whose children,
whose servants, whose subjects we are born; by
whose protection and provision we enjoy our life
and livelihood? Can there be a higher privilege
than liberty of access, with assurance of being fa-
vourably received in our needs, to him, who is tho-
roughly able to supply them? Can we desire upon
easier terms to receive benefits, than by acknow-
ledging our wants, and asking for them? Can there
be required a more gentle satisfaction from us for
our offences, than confession of them, accompanied
with repentance and effectual resolution to amend?
Is it not, in fine, most equal and fair, that we should
be obliged to promote his glory, who hath obliged
himself to further our good? The practice of such a
piety as it is apparently λογικὴ λατρεία, a *reasonable*
service, so it cannot but produce excellent fruits of
advantage to ourselves, a joyful peace of conscience,
and a comfortable hope, a freedom from all supersti-

S E R M. tious terrors and scruples, from all tormenting cares
XVI. and anxieties; it cannot but draw down from God's bountiful hands showers of blessings upon our heads, and of joys into our hearts; whence our obligation to these duties is not only reasonable, but very desirable.

Consider we next the precepts by which our religion doth regulate our deportment toward our neighbours and brethren; (so it styleth all men, intimating thence the duties it requireth us to perform toward them;) and what directions in that kind can be imagined comparably so good, so useful, as those which the gospel affordeth? An honest pagan historian saith of the Christian profession, that *nil nisi justum suadet et lene*; the which is a true, though not full character thereof. It enjoineth us, that we should sincerely and tenderly love one another, should earnestly desire and delight in each other's good, should heartily sympathise with all the evils and sorrows of our brethren, should be ready to yield them all the help and comfort we are able, being willing to part with our substance, our ease, our pleasure, for their benefit or succour; not confining this our charity to any sorts of men, particularly related or affected toward us, but, in conformity to our heavenly Father's boundless goodness, extending it to all; that we should mutually bear one another's burdens, and bear with one another's infirmities, mildly resent and freely remit all injuries, all discourtesies done unto us; retaining no grudge in our hearts, executing no revenge, but requiting them with good wishes and good deeds. It chargeth us to be quiet and orderly in our stations, diligent in our callings, veracious in our words, upright

Am. Marc. 1. 22.

in our dealings, observant of our relations, obedient and respectful toward our superiors, meek and gentle to our inferiors; modest and lowly, ingenuous and compliant in our conversation, candid and benign in our censures, innocent and inoffensive, yea courteous and obliging, in all our behaviour toward all persons. It commandeth us to root out of our hearts all spite and rancour, all envy and malignity, all pride and haughtiness, all evil suspicion and jealousy; to restrain our tongue from all slander, all detraction, all reviling, all bitter and harsh language; to banish from our practice whatever may injure, may hurt, may needlessly vex or trouble our neighbour. It engageth us to prefer the public good before any private convenience, before our own opinion or humour, our credit or fame, our profit or advantage, our ease or pleasure; rather discarding a less good from ourselves, than depriving others of a greater. Now who can number or estimate the benefits that spring from the practice of these duties, either to the man that observeth them, or to all men in common? *O divinest Christian charity, what tongue can worthily describe thy most heavenly beauty, thy incomparable sweetness, thy more than royal clemency and bounty! how nobly dost thou enlarge our minds beyond the narrow sphere of self and private regard into an universal care and complacence, making every man ourself, and all concernments to be ours! how dost thou entitle us unto, how dost thou invest us in, all the goods imaginable; dost enrich us with the wealth, dost prefer

* Τοιάστη γέρε ή τῆς ἀγάπης δύναμις· τοὺς εὐκ ἀπολαυσάντας τὸν ἀπολαυσόντων ἔξογος ποιεῖ χαίρειν, κοινὰ τὰ τῶν πλησίον ἀγαθὰ πείθουσα νομίζειν. Chrys. Ἀρδ. 19.

SERM. us with the honour, dost adorn us with the wisdom
XVI. and the virtue, dost bless us with all prosperity of
the world, whilst all our neighbour's good, by our
rejoicing therein, becometh our own ! how dost thou
raise a man above the reach of all mischiefs and dis-
asters, of all troubles and griefs, since nothing can
disturb or discompose that soul, wherein thou dost
constantly reside and absolutely reign ! how easily
dost thou, without pain or hazard, without drawing
blood or striking stroke, render him that enjoyeth
thee an absolute conqueror over all his foes, triun-
phant over all injuries without, and all passions
within ; for that he can have no enemy, who will be
a friend to all, and nothing is able to cross him, who
is disposed to take every thing well ! how sociable,
how secure, how pleasant a life might we lead under
thy kindly governance ! what numberless sorrows
and troubles, fears and suspicions, cares and distrac-
tions of mind at home, what tumults and tragedies
abroad, might be prevented, if men would but
hearken to thy mild suggestions ! what a paradise
would this world then become, in comparison to
what it now is, where thy good precepts and advices
being neglected, uncharitable passions and unjust
desires are predominant ! how excellent then is that
doctrine, which brought thee down from heaven,
and, would but men embrace thee, the peace and
joy of heaven with thee !

If we further survey the laws and directions which
our religion prescribeth concerning the particular
management of our souls and bodies in their re-
spective actions and enjoyments, we shall also find,
that nothing could be devised more worthy of us,
more agreeable to reason, more productive of our

welfare and our content. It obligeth us to preserve unto our reason its natural prerogative, or due empire in our souls, and over our bodies, not to suffer the brutish part to usurp and domineer over us; that we be not swayed down by this earthly lump, not enslaved to bodily temper, not transported with tumultuary humours, not deluded by vain fancy; that neither inward propensions nor impressions from without be able to seduce us to that which is unworthy of us, or mischievous to us. It enjoineth us to have sober and moderate thoughts concerning ourselves, suitable to our total dependence upon God, to our natural meanness and weakness, to our sinful inclinations, to the guilt we have contracted in our lives; that therefore we be not puffed up with self-conceit, or vain confidence in ourselves, or in any thing about us; (any wealth, honour, or prosperity.) It directeth us also to compose our minds into a calm, serene, and cheerful state; that we be not easily distempered with anger, or distracted with care, or overborne with grief, or disturbed with any accident befalling us; but that we be content in every condition, and entertain patiently all events, yea, accept joyfully from God's hand whatever he reacheth to us. It commandeth us to restrain our appetites, to be temperate in all our enjoyments, to abstain from all irregular pleasures, which are base in kind, or excessive in degree; which may corrupt our minds, or impair our health, or endamage our estate, or stain our good name, or prejudice our peace or repose: it doth not prohibit us the use of any creature, whence we may receive innocent convenience or delight, but indulgeth us a prudent and sober use of them all, with the sense of God's goodness, and thankfulness to him,

SERM. who bestoweth them upon us. Our religion also
XVI. further ordereth us (so far as our necessary occasions or duties permit) to sequester and elevate our minds from these low and transitory things, from the fading glories, the unstable possessions, the vanishing delights of this world; things indeed unworthy the attention, unworthy the affection of an heaven-born and immortal spirit; that we should fix our thoughts, our desires, our endeavours upon objects most worthy of them, objects high and heavenly, pure and spiritual, infinitely stable and durable; *not to love the world, and the things therein; to be careful for nothing, but to cast all our care upon God's providence; not to labour for the meat that perisheth, not to trust in uncertain riches;* to have our treasure, our heart, our hope, our conversation above in heaven. Such directions our religion prescribeth; by compliance with which, if man be at all capable of being happy, assuredly his happiness must be attained; for that no present enjoyment can render a man happy, all experience proclaimeth; the restless motions we continually see, the woful complaints we daily hear, do manifestly demonstrate.

And who seeth not the great benefits and the goodly fruits accruing from observance of these laws and rules? Who discerneth not the admirable consent of all these particular injunctions in our religion with that general one, *Whatever things are true, whatever things are just, whatever things are honest, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, or any praise, that we should mind such things, and practise them?* Such, and far more excellent than I am able to describe, is the rule

Vid. Grot.
de Veritate,
iv. 12.

Phil. iv. 8.

of Christian practice ; a rule in perfection, in beauty, in efficacy far surpassing all other rules ; productive of a goodness more complete, more lovely, more sprightly than any other doctrine or institution hath been or can be able to bring forth ; much exceeding, not only *the righteousness of blind Pharisees*, but all the virtue of the most sage^b philosophers ; somewhat in part concurrent therewith philosophy hath descried and delivered ; (it is no wonder it should, since all of it is so plainly consonant to reason;) yet what philosophy hath in this kind afforded, is in truth, if compared with what our religion teacheth, exceedingly meagre, languid, and flat : two words here, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself*, do signify more, do contain in them more sense and savour, to the judgment and relish of a well disposed mind, than the Ethics of Aristotle, the Offices of Cicero, the Precepts and Dissertations of Epictetus, the many other volumes of philosophical morality all put together ; in matter our rule is far more rich and full, more sweet and sapid than theirs ; in force and efficacy it doth also (as we shall hereafter see) far excel them^c.

^b Τί ἀν τις εἴποι τῶν πρωταγμάτων τὴν φιλοσοφίαν, τῶν οὐρανῶν νόμουν τὴν ἀρετὴν, τῆς ἀργελικῆς πολιτείας τὴν εὐταξίαν ; ταιῦτον γάρ ἡμῖν εἰσηγήσατο βίον, τοιάτους ἡμῖν ἔθηκε νόμους, τοιάτην κατεστήσατο πολιτείαν, ὃς τοῖς τούτοις χρωμένους ἀγγέλους εἰδένας γίνεσθαι, καὶ δικοὺς θεῷ κατὰ τὴν ὑπαρκίαν τῷ ἡμετέρῳ. Chrys. in Joh. i. 14.

^c Οσα ταρὰ τὰς καλῶς εἴργται, Χριστιανῶν ἐστι. Just. M. Apoll. 1.

Vid. Lud. Viv. in Aug. de Civ. D. x. 4.

Quæ disputationes, quæ literæ quorumlibet philosophorum, quæ leges quarumlibet civitatum duobus præceptis, ex quibus Christus dicit totam legem prophetasque pendere, ullo modo sint comparandæ ? Aug. Epist. iii. ad Volus. Vid. Chrys. Ἀνδρ. 19.

^c Διηλὼν ἔθελε τὸνόμα τὸ Χριστιανοῦ, ἄνδρα διὰ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ γνώσεως

SERM. 4. We may hereto annex this consideration, which
 XVI. may pass for another peculiar advantage of our religion, that as it delivereth so excellent and perfect a rule of life, so it delivereth it unto us pure from any allay embasing, free of any clog encumbering it; for that it chiefly, and in a manner only requireth of us a rational and spiritual service, consisting in performance of substantial duties, plainly necessary or profitable; not withdrawing us from the practice of solid piety and virtue by obligations to a tedious observance of many external rites; not spending the vigour of our minds upon superficial formalities, (or *busy scrupulosities*, as Tertullian termeth them^d,) such as serve only to amuse childish fancies, or to depress slavish spirits. It supposeth us men, men of good understanding and ingenuous disposition, and dealeth with us as such; and much more such it rendereth us, if we comply therewith. The ritual observances it enjoineth are as few in number, in nature simple and easy to perform, so evidently reasonable, very decent, and very useful; apt to instruct us in, able to excite us unto, the practice of most καὶ διδασκαλίας, σωφροσύνης καὶ δικαιοσύνης, καρτερίᾳ τε βίου καὶ ἀρετῆς ἀνδρίᾳ, εὐτεβείᾳ τε ὁμολογίᾳ ἑνὸς καὶ μόνου τοῦ ἐπὶ πάντων θεοῦ διαπρέπειν. Euseb. Hist. i. 4.

^d Negotiosae scrupulositates. *Tertull. in Marc. 2.*

Quædam pauca eademque factu facillima, et intellectu augustinissima, et observatione castissima Dominus, et apostolica tradidit disciplina, sicuti est baptismi sacramentum, et celebratio corporis et sanguinis Domini. *Aug. de Doct. Chr. iii. 9.*

Dominus noster Jesus Christus leni jugo nos subdidit, et sarcinæ levi; unde sacramentis numero paucissimis, significatione præstantissimis societatem novi populi colligavit; sicuti est baptismus Trinitatis nomine consecratus, communicatio corporis et sanguinis ipsius, et siquid aliud in scripturis canonicis commendatur. *Aug. Ep. 118. ad Januar.*

wholesome duties : which consideration sheweth this SERM. doctrine to be complete, suitable to the most adult XVI. age and best constitution, to the most ripe and improved capacities of man. But further,

5. Our religion hath also this especial advantage, that it setteth before us a living copy and visible standard of good practice ; wherein we have all its precepts compacted as it were into one body, and at once exposed to our view. Example yieldeth the Longum est iter per præcepta, breve et efficax per exempla. Sen.

most compendious instruction, together with the most efficacious incitement to action ; but never was there or could be any example in either respect comparable to this ; never was any so thoroughly perfect in itself, so purposely designed, so fitly accommodated for imitation, or so forcibly engaging thereto, as this : there is not one flaw, one spot, one false or uneven stroke in all this copy, so that we are secure from doing amiss in transcribing any part thereof ; it was intended to conduct us through all the parts of duty, especially those which are most high and difficult to our frail and decayed nature, general charity, self-denial, humility, and patience : it was admirably squared for the imitation of all men, the Person in whom it shined being, as it were, indefinite, and unrestrained to any single condition ; he being in right and power superior to the greatest princes, though according to choice and in outward parts inferior to the meanest subjects ; having under his command the largest wealth, although enjoying none ; being able readily to procure to himself what glory and respect he pleased, yet pleasing to pass obscure and disregarded ; so teaching those of highest rank to be sober and condescensive, those of lowest degree to be patient and content in their respective

SERM. states ; teaching all men not to rest in, nor much to regard, these present things, but singly in all their doings above all things to seek God's honour, with main resolution and diligence to prosecute his service : and as to all degrees, so to all capacities, was his practice suited, being neither austere nor remiss, formal nor singular, careless nor boisterous ; but in a moderate, even, and uniform course so tempered, that persons of all callings and all complexions easily might follow him in the practice of all true righteousness, in the performance of all substantial duties toward God and toward man. It is also an example attended with the greatest obligations and inducements to follow it ; the great excellency and high dignity of the Person, being the most holy, firstborn Son of God, heir of eternal majesty ; our manifold relations to him, being our Lord and Master, our best Friend, our most gracious Redeemer ; the many inestimable benefits received by us from him, all that redemption from extreme misery, and capacity of perfect happiness do import, are so many potent arguments engaging us to imitate him.

6. Further, our religion doth not only thus truly and fully acquaint us with our duty ; but, which is another peculiar virtue thereof, it buildeth our duty upon most solid grounds, presseth it with most valid inducements, draweth it from the best principles, and driveth it to the best ends : no philosophy can in any measure represent virtue so truly estimable and eligible, can assign so evident and cogent reason why we should embrace it and strictly adhere thereto, can so well discover or describe the excellent fruits that grow upon it, as doth this philosophy of ours, as the ancient Fathers are wont to call it:

Other philosophies have indeed highly commended SERM.
XVI. virtue, and vehemently exhorted thereto ; but the grounds on which they laid its praise are very sandy, the arguments by which they enforced its practice are very feeble, the principles from which they deduced it, and the ends which they propounded thereto, are very poor and mean, if we discuss them ; at least if they be compared with ours : virtue, said they, is a thing of itself, upon account of its own native beauty and worth, abstracting from all reward or profit springing from it, very admirable and desirable ; it is beside a very pleasant and very useful thing, begetting tranquillity and satisfaction of mind ; yielding health, safety, reputation, pleasure, quiet, and other manifold conveniences of life : but can so magnificent and so massy a fabric of commendation stand firm upon such foundations as these ? are these principles of love and admiration toward we know not what, these ends of temporal advantage and convenience, so noble or worthy ? are the accommodations of this short and uncertain life a proper encouragement or a just recompense for the laborious achievements of true virtue ? are these weapons sufficient to fortify men, or these discourses able to animate them in resisting the temptations which avert from virtue, or avoiding the enchantments which allure to vice ? Will men, I say, readily, for the sake of an imaginary or insensible thing, (a goodly name only, for all they see,) which representeth no more of benefit attending it, cross the bent of their natural inclinations, forfeit their present ease, reject certain fruitions of pleasure, wave occasions of getting to themselves profit, honour, and power, goods so manifestly substantial and grateful

SERM. to nature? will they undergo contentedly the difficulties, encounter the dangers, sustain the pains, the disgraces, the losses commonly incident to virtue? No surely, when it cometh to earnest trial, it will hardly seem reason or wisdom so to do. But the Christian doctrine, as it compriseth, and in an inferior order urgeth also, such grounds and arguments, so it doth exhibit others far more solid and forcible: it commendeth goodness to us, not only as agreeable to man's imperfect and fallible reason, but as conformable to the perfect goodness of God, as the dictate of his infallible wisdom, as the resolution of his most holy will; as enjoined by his unquestionable authority, as our indispensable duty, and only way to happiness: the principles, from which it willeth us to act, are love, reverence, and gratitude to God, hearty good-will toward men, and a sober regard to our own true welfare; the ends which it prescribeth are God's honour, public edification, and the salvation of our own souls: it stirreth us to good practice, by minding us, that we shall thereby resemble the Supreme Goodness, shall express our gratitude toward that great Benefactor, unto whom we owe all that we have; shall discharge our duty, pay due honour, perform faithful service to our Almighty Lord and King; that we shall thereby surely decline the wrath and displeasure of God, shall surely obtain his favour and mercy, with all sorts of blessings needful or profitable for us; that we shall not only avoid regrets and terrors of conscience here, but escape endless miseries and torments; we shall not only procure present comfort and peace of mind, but shall acquire crowns of everlasting glory and bliss. These surely are the truest and firmest grounds

upon which a right estimation of virtue can subsist; SERM.
these are motives incomparably most effectual to the
embracing thereof; these are the purest fountains
whence it can spring, the noblest marks whither it
can aim; a virtue so grounded, so reared, is certainly
most sound and genuine, most firm and stable, most
infinitely beneficial. But further,

7. It is a peculiar advantage of Christianity, (which no other law or doctrine so much as pretendeth to,) that it not only clearly teacheth us and strongly persuadeth us to so excellent a way of life, but provideth also sufficient help and ability to practise it; without which (such is the frailty of our nature, as experience proveth, that) all instruction, all exhortation, all encouragement, would avail little. Other laws, for want of this, are in effect *ministries of condemnation*, racks of conscience, parents of guilt and of regret; reading hard lessons, but not assisting to do after them; imposing heavy burdens, but not enabling to bear them: our law is not such; it is not *a dead letter*, but hath a *quicken^g spirit* accompanying it; it not only soundeth through the ear, but stampeth itself upon the heart of him that sincerely doth embrace it; it always carrieth with it a sure guide to all good, and a safe guard from all evil: if our mind be doubtful or dark, it directeth us to a faithful oracle, where we may receive counsel and information: if our passions are unruly, if our appetites are outrageous, if temptations be violent, and threaten to overbear us, it leadeth us to a full magazine, whence we may furnish ourselves with all manner of arms to withstand and subdue them: if our condition, in respect to all other means, be disconsolate or desperate, it sendeth us to a place,

XVI.

² Cor. iii. 7, 9.
Rom. v. 20.Aug. de
Spir. et lit.
Tūi iō̄ βιοῦ
ταρμησά-
νει λέγων
απός τού λα-
ττίνοντος
ιουστοῦ.
Clem. Alex.
Strom. vi.
p. 523.

SERM. where we shall not fail of refreshment and relief; it
XVI. offereth, upon our earnest seeking and asking, the
wisdom and strength of God himself for our direc-
tion, our aid, our support and comfort, in all exi-
gencies. To them, who with due fervency and con-
stancy *ask it*, God hath in the gospel promised to
Luke xi.13. grant his holy Spirit, to guide them in their ways,
to admonish them of their duty, to strengthen them
in obedience, to guard them from surprises and as-
saults of temptation, to sustain them, and cheer them
in afflictions. This advantage, as it is proper to our
religion, so it is exceedingly considerable; for what
would the most perfect rule or way signify, without
as well a power to observe it, as a light to discern
it? and how can man, (so ignorant, so impotent, so
inconstant a creature; so easily deluded by false ap-
pearances, and transported with disorderly passions;
so easily shaken and unsettled by any small assault,)
either alone without some guidance perceive, or by
himself without some assistance prosecute, what is
good for him, especially in cases of intricacy and
difficulty? how should he who hath frequent expe-
rience of his own weakness, not be utterly disheart-
ened and cast into despair either of standing fast in
a good state, or of recovering himself from a bad
one; of rescuing himself from any vicious inclina-
tion, or attaining any virtuous habit, if he did not
apprehend such a friendly power vigilantly guard-
ing him, ready upon all occasions to succour and
abet him? this consideration it is, which only can
nourish our hope, can excite our courage, can quicken
and support our endeavour in religious practice, by
assuring us, that there is no duty so hard, which by
the grace vouchsafed us we may not achieve; that

there is no enemy so mighty, which by the help SERM.
afforded us we cannot master; so that, although we XVI.
find ourselves *able to do nothing of ourselves*, yet Phil. iv. 13.
*we can do all things by Christ that strengtheneth
us.*

8. Another peculiar excellency of our religion is this, that it alone can appease and satisfy a man's conscience, breeding therein a well-grounded hope, and a solid comfort; healing the wounds of bitter remorse and anxious fear, which the sense of guilt doth inflict: *There is no man*, as king Solomon ^{2 Chron.} said, and all men know, *who sinneth not*; who doth ^{vi. 36.} Eccles. vii. ^{20.} not find himself in thought, word, and deed, frequently thwarting the dictates of reason, violating the laws of piety and justice, transgressing the bounds of sobriety; who consequently doth not in his own judgment condemn himself of disorder, and of offence committed against the world's great Law-giver and Governor, the just patron of right and goodness; who thence doth not deem himself obnoxious to God's wrath, and is not fearful of deserved punishment from him: which fear must ^{Pœna pot-} needs be fostered and augmented by considering, ^{est demni,} ^{culpa per-} that as past facts are irrevocable, so guilt is inde- ^{enarris erit.} *Ovid.* lible, and punishment, except by the voluntary remission of him that is offended, inevitable; as also that there are no visible means of removing or abating such guilt by any reparation or amends that he can make, who is more apt to accumulate new offences, than able to compensate for what he hath committed: now in such a case, some man indeed ^{Wisd. xii.} may frame to himself hopes of mercy; may from the ^{19.} experience of God's forbearance to punish, and continuance of his bounty to sinners, presume that God

SERM. is placable, and will not be rigorous in his proceedings with him ; may hopefully guess, that in favour God will admit his endeavours at repentance, will accept the compensations he offereth in lieu of his duty, may suffer his guilt to be atoned by the sacrifices he presenteth ; yet can no man upon such presumptions ground a full confidence that he shall find mercy ; he cannot however be satisfied upon what terms mercy will be granted, in what manner it shall be dispensed, or how far it shall extend ; God never having exhibited any express declarations or promises to those purposes ; no man therefore can otherwise than suspect himself to be in a bad state, or esteem himself secure from the pur-
Gen. iv. 7.suits of justice and wrath ; as he knoweth that *sin lieth at the door*, so he cannot know but that vengeance may lie near it ; hence common reason,
2 Cor. iii. 6.as well as the Jewish law, is a *ministry of death*, and a *killing letter*, carrying nothing in the looks or language thereof, but death and ruin ; hence is a man (if at least he be not besotted into a careless
Rom. viii. 15.stupidity) shut up in an irksome bondage of spirit, under the grievous tyranny, if not of utter despair, yet of restless suspicion about his condition ; which as it quencheth in his mind all steady peace and joy, so it dampeth his courage and alacrity, it enervateth his care and industry to do well, he doubting what success and what acceptance his undertakings may find ; it also cooleth in him good affections towards God, whom that he hath offended he knoweth, and questioneth whether he can be able to reconcile.

From this unhappy plight our religion thoroughly doth rescue us, assuring us, that God Almighty is

is not only reconcilable, but desirous, upon good SERM.
terms, to become our friend, himself most frankly XVI.
proposing overtures of grace, and soliciting us to
close with them ; it upon our compliance tendereth,
under God's own hand and seal, a full discharge of
all guilts and debts, however contracted ; it receiveth
a man into perfect favour and friendship, if he doth
not himself wilfully reject them, or resolve to con-
tinue at distance, in estrangement and enmity to-
ward God. It proclaimeth, that if we be careful to
amend, God will not be *extreme to mark what we* ^{Psal. cxxx.}
do amiss ; that iniquity, if we do not incorrigibly ^{3, 4}
affect and cherish it, *shall not be our ruin* ; that al- ^{Ezek. xviii.}
though by our infirmity we fall often, yet by our ^{30.}
repentance we may rise again, and by our sincerity
shall stand upright ; that our endeavours to serve
and please God (although imperfect and defective,
if serious and sincere) will be accepted by him : this
is the tenor of that great covenant between heaven
and earth, which the Son of God did procure by his
intercession, did purchase by his merits of wonderful
obedience and patience, did ratify and seal by his
blood ; did publish to mankind, did confirm by mi-
raculous works, did solemnize by holy institutions,
doth by the evangelical ministry continually recom-
mend to all men ; so that we can nowise doubt of
its full accomplishment on God's part, if we be not
deficient on ours : so to our inestimable benefit and
unspeakable comfort doth our religion ease their
conscience, and encourage them in the practice of
their duty, who do sincerely embrace it, and firmly
adhere thereto.

9. The last advantage which I shall mention of ^{1 Cor. i. 17.}
this doctrine is this ; that it propoundeth and as- ^{ii. 2.}
"Αγαλλω ;

SERM. serteth itself in a manner very convincing and satisfactory : it propoundeth itself in a style and garb of

μῆθος τῆς διληθίας
its hearers, so proper to the authority which it

τῆς Εὐαγγελίου.
Vid. Orig. in Cela. lib. claimeth, becoming the majesty and sincerity of di-

6. Lact. iii. 1. vine truth ; it expresseth itself plainly and simply,

Matt. vii. 29. without any affectation or artifice, without ostenta-

tion of wit or eloquence, such as men study to insinuate and impress their devices by : ^c it also speaketh with an imperious and awful confidence, such as argueth the speaker satisfied both of his own wisdom and authority ; that he doubteth not of what he saith himself, that he knoweth his hearers obliged to believe him ; its words are not like the words of a wise man, who is wary and careful that he slip not into mistake, (interposing therefore now and then his may-be's and perchances,) nor like the words of a learned scribe, grounded on semblances of reason, and backed with testimonies ; nor as the words of a crafty sophister, who by long circuits, subtile fetches, and sly trains of discourse doth inveigle men to his opinion ; but like the words of a king, carrying with them authority and power un-

Eccles. viii. 4. controllable, commanding forthwith attention, assent, and obedience ; ^d this you are to believe, this

you are to do, upon pain of our high displeasure, at

^c Οὐ γὰρ κτύπω ἡμέστεν, οὐδὲ λίξεως κόμπος, οὐδὲ ὀνομάτων καὶ ἡμά-
των κόσμους καὶ συθήκην ὑψώμενα περιττὴν καὶ ἀδόγτην (τοῦτο γὰρ ταῦτα
τῆς φιλοσοφίας ἀπάσχει) ἀλλὰ ισχὺν ἄμαχον καὶ θείαν, καὶ δογμάτων ὅρῶν
ἀμῆχανον δίναμον, καὶ μηρὸν χορηγίαν ἀγαθῶν. *Chrys. Prooem. in Joh.*

^d Quae quidem tradita sunt breviter, ac nude ; nec enim decebat aliter, ut cum Deus ad hominem loqueretur, argumentis assereret suas voces, tanquam fides ei non haberetur, sed ut oportuit est locutus, quasi rerum omnium maximus judex, cuius non est argumentari, sed pronunciare verum. *Lact. iii. 1.*

your utmost peril be it ; your life, your salvation de- SERM.
pendeth thereon : such is the style and tenor there- XVI.
of, plainly such as becometh the sovereign Lord
of all to use, when he shall please to proclaim his
mind and will unto us. It freeth us from labori-
ous and anxious inquiries, from endless disputes and
janglings, from urging ineffectual arguments, and
answering cross difficulties, &c. It doth also assert
itself and approve its truth to the reason of man the
most advantageously that can be ; with proofs most
suitable to itself, and in themselves most effectual ;
^s waving those inferior methods of subtle argument-
ation and plausible language with which men are
wont to confirm or set off their conceits ; which how
weak they are, how unfit to maintain truth, their
unsuccessfulness doth evince ; seeing by those means
scarce any man hath been able thoroughly either to
settle himself in or to draw others to a full persua-
sion concerning any important truth, discosted from
sense : such methods therefore the Christian doc-
trine hath waved, (or rather slighted, as beneath it-
self,) applying arguments to the demonstration of its
truth, far more potent, more sublime, and indeed
truly divine ; beside its intrinsic worth, or the ex-
cellency shining in itself, (which speaketh it worthy
of God, and goeth more than half way in proving it
to proceed from him,) there is no kind of attestation
needful or proper, which God hath not afforded
thereto ; God is in himself invisible and undiscern-
ible to any sense of ours, neither could we endure
the lustre and glory of his immediate presence ; it

^s Legant nostra—quam excellenter quam divine, non tanquam
ex philosophorum concordationibus strepere, sed tanquam ex ora-
culis et Dei nubibus intonare. *Aug. de Civ. Dei*, ii. 19.

SERM. must be therefore by effects of his incommunicable
XVI. power, by works extraordinary and supernatural, (such as no creature can perform or counterfeit,) that he must, if ever, convincingly signify his purpose or pleasure to us ; and such innumerable hath God vouchsafed to yield in favour and countenance of our religion ; by clearly predicting and presignifying the future revelation of this doctrine by express voices and manifest apparitions from heaven, by suspending and thwarting the course of natural causes in many ways and instances, by miracles of providence no less remarkable than those of nature, by internal attestations to the minds and consciences of men ; things too great slightly to be passed over, and the particular mention of which I must therefore now omit ; by such wonderful means, I say, hath God taken care to convince us, that our religion came from him, which is a peculiar advantage that it hath, such as no other institution (except that of the Jews, which was a prelude thereto, and whose truth serveth to confirm it) can reasonably pretend unto ; and a great perfection it is thereof, since as it is no small content to a traveller, by a direction which he can fully confide in, to know that he is in the right way to his journey's end ; so it cannot but prove an exceeding satisfaction and encouragement to us to be assured, by infallible testimony of God himself, that our religion is the true and direct way unto eternal happiness.

These considerations may, I conceive, be sufficient, as to vindicate our religion from all aspersions cast upon it either by inconsiderate and injudicious, or by vain and dissolute persons ; so to confirm us all in the esteem, and incite us to the practice thereof ;

which use of them God in his mercy grant, through SERM.
Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom for ever be all XVI.
praise. *Amen.*

*Now the God of grace, who hath called us unto ^{1 Pet. iv.10,}
his eternal glory by Christ Jesus—make you per-
fect, stablish, strengthen, settle you; to him be glory
and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

*Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, ^{2 Thess. ii.}
even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath ^{16, 17.}
given us everlasting consolation and good hope
through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish
you in every good word and work.*

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N XVII.

THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

ACTS ix. 22.

— *Proving that this is the very Christ.*

But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ. *Eu-
seb. Hist. i. 3.*

AS for the name of *Messias*, there is evident reason why it should not be openly expressed in the ancient predictions; it being an easy thing for any persons, out of imposture or wantonness, to have assumed that name; and consequently it would not have suited so well the true person. It was therefore more expedient, that his name should rather only be covertly signified or intimated; it was sufficient that a name should be imposed on him well agreeing to his office and chief performances. There be indeed several names attributed to the Messias;

Isa. vii. 14. They shall call his name Emanuel, said Isaiah;

Jer. xxiii. 6. This is his name, whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness, (*Jehovah tsidkenu;*) and,

Isa. ix. 6. His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace, said Isaiah again; but it is apparent, that these were not intended to be so much his proper names, as attributes or epithets congruous unto him in regard to the eminency of his person and performances.

The prophet Zechariah seemeth also (insisting in SERM. the footsteps of Isaiah and Jeremiah) to assign him XVII. the name Netser, (or the Branch;) *Behold the man* <sup>Zech. vi.
12. iii. 8.</sup> *whose name is The Branch:* but this only denoted ^{Ia. iv. 2. xi. 1.} an appellation suiting him, as derived from the <sup>Jer. xxiii. 5.
xxxiii. 15.</sup> stock of David, and might beside mystically allude ^{Matt. ii. 23.} to some circumstance concerning him. It doth not therefore appear, that the one proper name, by which the **Messias**, as the Son of man, should be known and called, is directly forementioned; yet it is reasonable to suppose, that God would have an especial care, that he should have one befitting him. It was one of the seven things which the Talmudists say were constituted before the world: the *law, repentance, paradise, hell, the throne of glory, the sanctuary, the name of the Messias;* according to that in the seventy-second Psalm, ver. 17. *Ante solem primum nomen ejus;* so it seems they read it: the LXX. have it, *πρὸ τοῦ ἡλίου διαμενεῖ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ.*

It was anciently a method of Divine Providence to impose upon persons (destinated by God to be especial subjects of his favour and eminent ministers of his glory) names answerable to the nature of their employment, or to the design which was by their means and ministry to be accomplished. Whereby as God's care and providence over human affairs was declared, so men upon the mention of such names were admonished to consider the divine benefits, and the duties correspondent to them. The particular reason of imposing such names is sometime expressly set down; as in the cases of Seth, Abraham, Israel, <sup>Gen. iv. 25.
xvii. 5.</sup> Solomon; sometime it seems tacitly implied, the actions of the persons interpreting the reason of their <sup>xxxii. 28.
^{1 Chr. xxii. 9.}</sup>

S E R M. names; as in Melchizedek, Joshua, Malachi; and perhaps in many others.

Gen. xiii. 18.
Heb. vii. 1. This method with great reason we may suppose that the same divine wisdom would use in assigning John x. 36. a name to that person, whom from the beginning of things he had promised, and before the foundation of the world had designed to sanctify and send into the world, for achieving the most high and excellent design that ever, for the glory of God and the good of his creation, was to be undertaken in this world. Most fit it would be, that God himself should be his god-father; that he should have no ordinary, no casual, no insignificant name; but such an one, which being heard might instruct and admonish us, might raise in us a sense of God's infinite mercy and bounty toward us; might breed love in our hearts, and impress veneration on our minds toward him, who should bear that auspicious and comfortable name; that name, which as the spouse of the mystical Solomon in her mystical song, did sing, is *as an ointment poured forth*, full of most wholesome and most pleasant fragrance.

Cant. i. 3.
Is. xxv. 9.
xxxv. 4.
xlix. 8, 26.
lxiii. 1, 1v.
5, 1ii. 7, 10.
lxii. 10, lix.
16.
Hos. i. 7.
Zech. ix. 9.
John iv. 42. Now since of all the Messias's performances none was to be more signal, than that of saving; to publish, to purchase, to effect salvation, were to be (according to what the prophets expressly and frequently say) his peculiar works; to be the Saviour of the world was (as we before touched, according to the common opinion of the Jews) a proper attribute of his.

Wherefore the name Jesus (which we are told in the Gospel was by direction from God imparted by particular revelation, brought by an archangel from

heaven, imposed on our Lord) did very well suit the SERM. XVII.
Messias. No other name could be more sweet or acceptable; no other name could better become him, who was to redeem men from all their enemies, their slaveries, their errors, their sins, their miseries.

It was indeed a name not in its immediate application altogether new, for many others had borne it: Jesus, the son of Justus, we have mentioned in St. Paul; Jesus the son of Sirach, that excellent writer, we know; and divers others so named occur in Josephus: yet was it questionless by God's providence, or by Moses, by divine instinct, first produced with relation to the Messias: *Moses called Oshea the son of Nun Jehoshua*, saith the text: being in a mysterious exchange from a former name assigned to the famous Jesus (as not only Bensirach, but the apostle to the Hebrews write him) the son of Nun, who of all the ancient types did most exactly (in office and performance) represent and presignify the Messias; being, as Bensirach speaks, *great for the saving of God's elect*; whose actions are wonderfully congruous to those which we attribute to our Jesus. For, by the way, to shew the resemblance, (omitting less, and more nice congruities,) as Joshua did bring the good report, and evangelized concerning the promised land, (when other false or faint inquirers defamed it, and discouraged the people from entering;) as he was educated under Moses, and served him faithfully; as he succeeded in the administration and government of God's people, perfecting what Moses had begun of deliverance and settlement to them; as he brought the Israelites (not that old disbelieving, mutinous, and repining

Matt. i. 21.
Luke i. 32.
Col. iv. 11.
Basil. Iren. &c.
Num. xiii. 16.
Eccl. xlvi.
Heb. iv. 8.
Num. xiv. 7.

SER.M. generation, but a new progeny of better disposed people) finally out of the wilderness into Canaan, by God's miraculous assistance, subduing their enemies, *Josh. v. 2.* and establishing them in a quiet possession of the promised land, allotting unto each tribe its inheritance; and as he did re-circumcise the children of *Heb. xi.* Israel: so did our heavenly Jesus first make a true and faithful discovery concerning the mystical land of promise (that better country) flowing with spiritual milk and honey, (abundant with all spiritual comforts and pleasures, for the food, sustenance, and refreshment of our souls.) He was born under the Law, and submitted to its injunctions, fulfilling all righteousness. He survived it, (the part of it which was purely Mosaical and arbitrary,) and did complete it. He doth conduct God's regenerate people (such as believe, and willingly follow him) out of the desert state of error, guilt, and sin, into the superior state of happy rest and joy, with miraculous power and efficacy; vanquishing all the spiritual Amorites, (the *devil, world, and flesh*) which infest, obstruct, and oppose them; settling them in a perpetual, undisturbed, and immoveable enjoyment of that blissful region; having also by a spiritual circumcision prepared and consecrated them to God. Our Saviour therefore, not only when he at last in fulness of truth did come into the world, but anciently in type and shadow, may be supposed to have received this name Jesus, conferred upon him in the person of Joshua, his most illustrious representative. It certainly was most apposite to the Messias.

That Jesus (that person, whose birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension hence, are related in the evangelical histories) is *the Christ*, is the principal

*Gal. iv. 4.
Matt. iii.
15. v. 17.
Alexandrin
Gensis, over
cias, eti
caus.*

article of pure faith; the most peculiar doctrine of our religion as such, and as distinct from all other religions: it indeed virtually comprehends all other doctrines of moment therein, regarding either faith or practice. For that our being persuaded that *Jesus is the Christ*, implies, that we apprehend ourselves obliged to embrace for truth whatever was taught by him and his apostles, to obey all his laws, to rely upon him for attainment of all the mercies, and blessings, and rewards, which he promised to dispense, in that order and upon those terms, which the gospel declareth. Whence to the hearty belief of this point such great commendations are given, so high rewards are offered, so excellent privileges are annexed in the scriptures. Whence also the declaring, proving, and persuading this doctrine was the chief matter of the apostles' preaching, as both their profession and practice do shew. *The Jews*, saith St. Paul to the Corinthians, *require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ, that was crucified.* And, *I determined*, saith he again of himself, *not to know any thing among you,* (that is, not to discover any other knowledge, not to insist on any other subject,) *save Jesus Christ, even him that was crucified.* This, St. John tells us, was the drift of his writing the gospel, (which is a more extensive and durable way of preaching.) *These things, saith he, were written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ.* And their practice, suitable to such professions, is apparent in divers passages of this book, wherein their acts and their discourses are reported. This text particularly represents the scope to which St. Paul mainly directed his

Cor. i. 23.
ii. 2.

καὶ τὸν
ιεραπο-
μίον.

John xx.

31.

SER.M. preaching, which was the maintenance and persuasion of this point, that *Jesus is the Christ.*

It is therefore very requisite, that we should well understand the meaning thereof, and that we should firmly be persuaded of its truth. To which purpose I shall endeavour, by God's assistance, to imitate St. Paul's practice here, who did *συμβάζειν*, (that is the Greek word here, signifying primarily to put or bring things together, and thence in a way of collection or argumentation to teach,) who, I say, did instruct his auditors, collecting it from testimonies of ancient scripture, and confirming it by arguments grounded thereon. In performing which I shall observe this method :

1. I shall explain the notion and reason of this name, or title, *Christ.*
2. I shall shew (that which is here tacitly supposed) that there was by God's appointment to be, or to come into the world from God, one person, signally that, which this name or title imports, ὁ Χριστός, *the very Christ.*
3. I shall argue that *Jesus* was that person.
4. I shall explain in what manner, in what respects, to what purposes, *Jesus*, in the New Testament, is represented as *Christ.*
5. I shall make some practical application of the point.

John i. 21.
iv. 25. I. For the first particular. Christ is a name, or title, importing office and dignity ; being the same with Messias, that in Greek, this in Hebrew, signifying, the Anointed ; the which appellation we find attributed to several persons upon the following ground : Of ancient times, in the eastern countries,

(abounding as with good oil, so with many delicate SERM.
odoriferous spices,) it seems generally to have been XVII.
the manner, (as from Hazael the Syrian his being ^{1 Kings}
anointed may probably be collected,) it was how-^{xix. 15.}
ever such among the Jews, to separate or consecrate
persons, and things also I might add, designed to
any great or extraordinary employment, by anointing
them with ointments composed of those ingre-
dients ; they symbolizing, or denoting thereby, as it
seems, both a plentiful effusion upon them of gifts
and faculties qualifying them for such services ; and
also a comfortable and pleasant diffusion of good
and grateful effects expected from them ; (from the
use of things, the performances of persons thus sanc-
tified.) *Thy name*, saith the spouse in the Canticles, ^{Cant. i. 2.}
is an ointment poured forth ; that is, thy name
is very delightful, very acceptable. And, *Behold,* ^{Ps. cxxxiii.}
saith David, commanding brotherly love and concord,^{1, 2.}
how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to
dwell together in unity ; it is like the precious oint-
ment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard,
even Aaron's beard : so good and pleasant were
those employments hoped to be, to which men were
by such unction inaugurated. We find especially
three sorts of persons, to whom this consecration did,
by divine appointment, belong ; kings, priests, and
prophets ; persons by whose ministry God of old did
manage his intercourse with men, in governing them
and communicating his blessings to them, both in an
ordinary way (so he used kings and priests) and in
an extraordinary manner, therein he employed pro-
phets ; which sorts of persons are therefore styled
God's anointed ; kings and priests more frequently,
but sometimes also prophets ; as in that of the Psalm ;

SERM. *Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm;* where prophets and the anointed of God do seem to denote the same thing, and one to expound the other: however they belong to the same persons; for Abraham, whom together with the other patriarchs those words concern, is expressly called a prophet. (*Now therefore, saith the text, restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live.*) And that Isaac was a prophet, the apostle to the Hebrews intimates, saying; *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.* The same is plain of Jacob, who before his death uttered many great and remarkable predictions. The patriarchs therefore probably as prophets were styled *God's anointed.* But to remark somewhat of these great offices, and their anointing singly:

For priests, although at first all the sons of Aaron were thus consecrated, according to that law in

Exodus, Thou shalt anoint Aaron, and his sons, 30. xl. 15. *Χριστεῖσθαι, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office;* yet the Jewish masters tell us, that afterward in all the course of times only the high priest was consecrated. Whence by the anointed, or the priest that is anointed, is, say they, meant the high priest, in distinction from other inferior priests.

For kings, the Jewish doctors also (as master Selden reports) do tell us, that such of them, who in a legal, orderly, and unquestioned course of right did succeed into the kingdom, were not themselves in person anointed, (they being conceived to derive a sufficient consecration from their ancestors;) but all those, who in an extraordinary way by special designation, (as Saul, David, Jehu, Hazael,) or upon

2 Kings ix. 3. xl. 12.

a doubtful and controverted, or opposed title, (as SERM. Solomon and Joas,) did assume the royal charge, XVII. were thus initiated: (how ancient also the custom of anointing princes was, may be seen from that expression in Jotham's parable; *The trees went forth to anoint a king over them, and they said to the olive tree, Reign thou over us.*)^{Kings xix. 15. i. 39. Judges ix. 8.}

As for prophets, we do not find that they were commonly, or according to ordinary rule, anointed; but one plain instance we have of Elisha, substituted to Elijah, (the chief of prophets in his time,) in this manner: *Elisha, it is said by God, the son of Shaphat, shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room;* who was thus consecrated, probably, because he was to be a prophet more than ordinary, endued with higher gifts, and designed to greater actions, than common prophets were then; or perhaps because he was to be the archprophet, or head of the prophets at that time.

We may also further observe, that some persons, who (in probability) did not partake any material unction, but were yet destinated by God, and qualified and employed as special instruments of his providence or grace, for producing effects suitable to any of those offices, have been therefore styled *God's anointed.* Upon which score the patriarchs (by whom God's true religion was maintained and conveyed) do seem to have been called God's anointed. And king Cyrus (whose ministry God used in the reedifying his temple and refreshing his people) is therefore termed God's Christ, or anointed; (*Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus my Christ;* τῷ Χριστῷ μου Κύρῳ) the name of the sign being im-

^{1 Chron. xvi. 22.}
^{Isa. xliv. 1.}
^{xliv. 28.}

SERM. parted to persons who were endued with the qualities, or did perform the effects signified thereby.

XVII. These things being considered, it appeareth that the name *Christ* doth import a person in a special and signal manner designed and ordained by God to one, or some, or all of these charges and functions ; an extraordinary king, or a great priest, or an eminent prophet ; or one, in whom either more or all of these did concur. So much may suffice for the notion and reason of this title, *Christ*.

II. Now that there was a Person supereminently endued with all these characters, (a *Christ* in all these respects,) decreed by God in due time to come into the world for accomplishment of the greatest purposes answerable to that title, (for the instruction and reformation of the world, for the erecting and managing an universal and perpetual kingdom, for the reconciliation and benediction of mankind, for the reduction of all nations to the acknowledgment of God, and obedience to his will, and hope in his mercy,) many express passages in the ancient scripture declare.

That such a prophet should be sept, Moses in express terms foretold : *The Lord thy God*, saith he,
Deut. xviii. 15, 18.
John i. 46. *shall raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me ; unto him shall ye hearken : and, I will, saith God himself, raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee ; and I will put my words into his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him, &c.* which words plainly describe a very extraordinary prophet some time to come, who was (signally and especially, beyond all other prophets)

to resemble Moses ; who consequently was to accomplish high designs, and to achieve wonderful acts ; to conduct and deliver God's people, to reveal God's mind and will, to promulge a new law, and establish a new covenant ; so his resembling Moses doth imply, so his mission doth signify ; (for why, if he were not intended for the performance of somewhat great and new, even beyond what Moses did; should he be designed so formally ; what need or reason had there been of his mission after Moses ?) and so the later prophets do interpret the great Lawgiver's words : who largely predict concerning one, ordained by God to come, who should eminently discharge all parts of the prophetical function ; who should disclose new truths to men, should proclaim a new law to the world, should *establish a new covenant* ^{Jer. xxxi. Isa. xlix. 8.}
with the house of Israel, and with all people ; who should propagate the knowledge and worship of God, enlightening the Gentiles, and converting them unto God ; who should instruct the ignorant, strengthen the faint, comfort the afflicted ; according to divers passages concerning him ; as, for instance, that in Isaiah, cited by St. Luke : *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me ; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek ; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted*— and that in the same prophet alleged by St. Matthew : *Behold my servant, whom I uphold ; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth ; I have put my Spirit upon him : he shall bring forth judgment unto the Gentiles : he shall not cry, &c.* ; which being anointed to preach tidings and to bring forth judgment from God, being elected and inspired by God in order to such performances, are peculiar marks of a prophet ; such

<sup>Isa. lxi. 1.
Luke iv. 18.</sup>

<sup>Isa. xliii. 1.
Matt. xii. 18.</sup>

SER.M. promulgation of God's will, such ministration of direction and comfort from God, are the proper employment of a prophet; that is, of an especial agent sent and qualified by God to transact spiritual affairs with men, and to declare or denounce his pleasure to them.

The ancient scriptures do also plainly signify concerning the same person, that he should be a great Prince constituted by God to govern his people for

Acts ii. 36. Luke i. 71, ever in righteousness, peace, and prosperity; endued
74. with power requisite for delivering them from oppression and slavery; for subduing their enemies, for reducing the nations under subjection unto God.

Isa. ix. 6. Isaiah: *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders—Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice for*

Jer. xxxiii. 5. ever. Jeremiah: *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth: in his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely.*

Ezek. xxxiv. 22, Ezekiel: *I will save my flock, they shall be no more a prey—and I will set up one &c. xxxvi. 21, shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—they &c. xxxvii. 21, &c. shall also walk in my statutes, and observe my*

Dan. vii. 13, statutes, and do them. Daniel: *I saw in the night 14. ii. 44, visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came 45. with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days—And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages shall serve him: his dominion is an*

*everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, SERM.
and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* XVII.

Hosea : *The children of Israel shall return, and Hos. iii. 5.
seek the Lord their God, and David their king;
and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the
latter days.* The Psalmist : *I have set my King* Psal. ii. 6, 8.
upon my holy hill of Sion; ask of me, and I will lxxii. 11,
give thee the uttermost parts of the earth for thy 1. xlvi. 6.
possession. In these and in many other places do 1 xxix. 3,
the prophets speak (very perspicuously and magnifi- 27, 36.
cently) concerning the kingdom, royal state, and cxxxii. 17,
princely achievements of this great personage who 18.
should come.

That he also should assume and execute the priestly function may also be learned from prophetic instruction. For of him Zechariah thus spake : *Behold the man whose name is The Branch;* (a Zech. vi. 12.
name, which so often (in sense) is attributed to this δέρματις προσώπου Person, as sprouting from the stock of David;) *he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit, and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of the Lord shall be between them both.* Of him also David spake : *The Lord hath sworn, and Ps. cx. 4.
will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after
the order of Melchizedek.* To make reconciliation Dau. ix. 24.
for iniquity, (which Daniel ascribes to him;) to bear the sins of the people, and to make intercession for the transgressors, (which are assigned to him by Isaiah;) are also performances, from which his spiritual Isa. liii. 12.
cerdotal office may be collected.

These things being considered, it is no wonder that the ancient Jews (although the text of scripture Ps. xlv. 7.
Isa. lxi. 1.)

SER.M. doth seldom, perhaps not oftener than once, (in the
 XVII. ninth of Daniel,) explicitly and directly apply this
 name of Christ, or Messias, to this illustrious Person,
 so prophesied of and promised to come) did espe-
 cially assign this title unto him ; it seeming of any
 most congruous and most comprehensive of what
 appertained to him ; most apt to denote all the pre-
 rogatives, the endowments, the achievements, the
 effects, which should belong to him, or proceed from
 him. Whence it is observed by the learned, that
 the Chaldee Paraphrase (composed, as they say, be-
 fore Jesus our Lord's time, by the priests, as an in-
 terpretation of the not so exactly understood He-
 brew scripture, for edification and instruction of the
 people) doth very often apply unto him this name of
 the Messias : according to whose exposition and
 style, together with tradition continually deduced
 down from the prophets themselves, (as is probable,)
 we see plainly from the New Testament, and from
 other history conspiring therewith, that God's people
 unanimously did expect a person under this name
 and notion, who should be endued with qualities and
 should perform actions conformable to the charac-
 ters mentioned, to come in determinate time into
 the world. Of Anna the prophetess it is said, that

*Luke ii. 38. she gave thanks likewise to the Lord, and spake of him πᾶσι τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν, to all that ex-
 pected redemption in Jerusalem.* Hence when St.

John the Baptist did live, and teach in a manner

*Luke iii. 15. extraordinary, the people did expect, and all men
 mused in their hearts concerning him, whether he*

*John i. 19. were the Christ. Yea the Jews (that is, their se-
 nate, or great sanhedrim) sent priests and Levites to inquire of him, whether he were the Christ or*

so : and when Jesus's admirable discourses and SERM. works had convinced divers persons, they said, XVII. *When Christ comes, shall he do greater miracles* John vii. 31. *than this man hath done ?* and the report which Philip made to Nathanael concerning Jesus was this ; *We have found him, of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets, did write* : so at large they did presume concerning a *Christ to come*. That John iv. 42. they particularly did conceive he should be a great prophet, who should abundantly declare God's truth and will, may be gathered from divers passages ; as from that in St. John : *Men therefore seeing the miracle that Jesus had done, said, That this is in truth the prophet, who was to come into the world.* John vi. 14. Thus may that in St. Luke be taken ; *And there Luk.vii. 16. came a fear upon all ; and they glorified God, saying, That the great prophet is risen up among us ; and, That God hath visited his people :* and this the Samaritan woman implied, when she said, *I know that the Messias comes ; and when he shall John iv. 25. come, he will tell us all things.* That they supposed he should be a king, who should be furnished with mighty power, and should perform wonderful acts ; who should assume the government of God's people with royal majesty, and execute it with glorious success, is most clear. It was no wonder to king Herod to hear the wise men's inquiry, *Where Matt. ii. 2, is he that is born King of the Jews ?* Upon it he⁴ immediately demands of the Scribes *where Christ is to be born.* Hence no sooner did Nathanael believe in Christ, but he cries out, *Master, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.* It was upon this supposition that the priests grounded their calumny ; *We have found this man perverting the* Luke xxiii. ^{3.}

SERM. *nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar,*
XVII. *saying, that he himself is Christ, the King;* as

Luke xix. also hence (upon information and by instinct from
 them) Pilate asked him that question, *Art thou the*

38. King of the Jews? hence likewise proceeded that
 acclamation; Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος βασιλεὺς, *Blessed*
is the King, that is to come in the name of the

Lord. And it was from this ancient popular prejudice,
Acts i. 6. that the apostles asked Jesus after his resurrection,
Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? It is indeed the ordinary title,
 which the Talmudists and ancient Rabbins give the

Messias, Hammelch Messiah, Messias the King.

That the Messias in their opinion was also to be a priest, is not so clearly apparent; yet it may probably be inferred: that they understood the 110th Psalm to respect the Messias is very likely, or rather certain, from that passage in the gospel, in which

Matt. xxii. Jesus asked the Pharisees, *What think ye of Christ?*
 43. *whose son is he?* and they answering, *The Son of*

David, he returned upon them this puzzling question; *How then doth David in the spirit* (that is, prophetically) *call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand?* which question confounded them, they not daring to deny that Psalm to respect the Messias, (it being the received opinion among the doctors,) nor yet seeing how the relations of *Son* and *Lord* were reconcilable: and admitting that Psalm was to be referred unto the Messias, they must consequently acknowledge him to be a priest; for it is there said,
Psal. cx. 4. *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.* It was also an opinion passing among them,

that the Messias should be the Saviour of the world, SERM. XVII.
as may be collected from that saying of the Samaritans; *We have heard him ourselves, and know John iv. 42.
that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world*: which being their opinion, and toward the salvation of men it being needful that a reconciliation of them unto God, and an expiation of their sins, (which are sacerdotal acts) should be procured by him, it seems to follow, that they had some notion of his *priesthood*. Indeed the persuasion concerning a Messias to come, about the time when our Lord appeared, became diffused over the whole eastern parts; as even pagan historians (Tacitus and Suetonius) do report^b. And the conceit thereof was so vigorous in the Jews, that it excited them to rebellion, and encouraged them with great obstinacy to persist therein, as not only those historians, but Josephus himself telleth usⁱ; he also together with them (which is somewhat strange) referring the intent of those prophecies, and the verifying of that opinion, to the person of the emperor Vespasian. The same conceit did then likewise occasion many pretenders and impostors (such as Theudas, and Judas the Galilean) to arise, disposing also the

^b Percrebuerat oriente toto vetus et constans opinio esse in fatis, ut eo tempore Judæa profecti rerum potirentur. *Suet. in Vesp.*

Pluribus persuasio inerat antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur. *Tacitus Hist. v.*

ⁱ Τὸ δὲ ἐπάραν αὐτῶν μάλιστα πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον ἦν χρησμὸς ἀμφίβολος ὡμοίων ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς εὑρημένος γράμμασιν, ὃς κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκεῖνον ἀπὸ τῆς χύρας τις αὐτῶν ἄρχει τῆς οἰκουμένης.—ἔδήλου δὲ ἄμα τὴν περὶ Οὐεστασιανοῦ τὸ λόγιον ἡγεμονιαν, ἀποδειχθέντος ἐπὶ Ιουδαῖας αὐτοκράτορος. *Jos. ἀλώσ. vi. 31.*

SER.M. people so easily to be deluded by them, and so readily to run after them, as they did to their own harm.

Thus according to the ancient scriptures, interpreted and backed by the current tradition and general consent of God's people, it is sufficiently apparent, that a *Messias* (according to the notion premised) was to come into the world.

III. Now further, that Jesus, whom we acknowledge, was indeed that *Messias*, may appear plainly from the perfect correspondency of all circumstances belonging to the *Messias*'s appearance, and of all characters suiting his person, and of all things to be performed by him; together with whatever was to be consequent upon his presence and performances; according to ancient presignifications and predictions, and according to the passable opinions of God's people concerning him; the which, as they cannot possibly suit with any other person that hath yet appeared, or may reasonably be expected to come hereafter, so they exactly agree to the coming, and person, and practice, and success of Jesus.

Among circumstances the most considerable is the time; the which (both when it was said that he should come, and when it was fit that he should come) did very well agree to Jesus. *But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son,*

Gal. iv. 4.
Eph. i. 10.
Actxiv.16.
xvii. 30. &c. *Fulness* in regard to ancient prediction, in regard to fitness of season. For as the *Messias* was to be *the desire of all nations*, so Jesus did come then, when by special instinct a general expectation and desire of his coming was raised in the world; at the time, when the patriarch Jacob foretold that

Gen. xl ix. 8. *Shiloh would come, viz. when the sceptre was just*

departed from Judah, and a Lawgiver from his feet; Judæa being brought under the dominion of strangers; (such were the Romans, such was king Herod.) About the expiration of Daniel's weeks, (however commenced or computed,) *the time determined to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to introduce everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy,* (as the prophet speaks.) Shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem, according to that of Daniel; *And after sixty and two weeks shall Messias be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.* When that *Zion, out of which,* as Isaiah tells us, *the law was to go forth, and out of which the Redeemer should come, and turn ungodliness from Jacob,* did stand and flourish. When the temple did stand, which the prophets Malachi and Haggai did predict should be illustrated by the presence of the Messiah; *The Lord, whom ye seek,* saith Malachi, *shall suddenly come to his temple; even the messenger of the covenant, in whom ye delight:* and, *I will, saith Haggai, shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come;* ^{9.} *and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord: the glory of this latter house shall be greater than the glory of the former, saith the Lord of hosts.* Before Jewry was desolated, Jerusalem destroyed, the tribes and families of Israel confounded, all that people wofully dispersed, and in a palpable manner deserted by God. When the Jewish religion (which the Messias was to complete) was by a numerous accession of proselytes disseminated throughout the world, the Serm. XVII. Dan. ix. 24. Isa. ii. 3. lxx. 20. Mal. iii. 1. Hag. ii. 7. Ps. lxxii. 7. Isa. ii. 4. xi. 6. lxv. 25. lxvi. 12.

SER.M. nated and diffused through many provinces of that
 XVII. one vast empire, under which a great part of the world was united and settled durably in a calm state of peace and order: when one or two languages were commonly understood by all, and men thereby more easily conversed together; and when the ancient scriptures being translated into Greek

Dan. xii. 4. were so widely intelligible. When mankind was become generally civilized and cultivated with laws, and policy, and learning; with knowledge of arts and philosophy; the world then beginning of itself to open its eyes, so as to discern the errors and deceits, by which it long had been abused; and was thence well prepared to learn, and rendered very susceptible of divine truth; when all things thus conspired with good advantage to entertain the

Gal. iv. 4. Christ, then *in the fulness of time*, in the right and Eph. i. 10. proper season, (*καιροῖς ἴδιοις*, as St. Paul speaketh)

1 Tim. ii. 6. Isa. xlix. 8.

² Cor. vi. 2. *καιρῷ δέκτῳ*, *in an acceptable time*, as Isaiah prophesied, did Jesus come, to instruct and reform the world, as he professed. It was Porphyry's objection against Christianity, and an obvious one, why Christ did not come before, but in the latter days; to which the particular fitness of this time is an answer.

The other circumstances; the family out of which, the place where, the manner in which, Jesus was born, did also punctually correspond. He was to be an Israelite, according to the promise made of old

Gen. xxii. 18. to Abraham, that *in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed*; and according to Moses's

Deut. xviii. 15. prophecy; *The Lord thy God shall raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren.* He was to come out of the tribe of Judah;

Gen. xl ix. 7, &c. Rev. v. 5. as the patriarch Jacob in his last prophetical rap-
 xxii. 16.

ture did by various expressions intimate and signify. SERM. Particularly he was to rise out of the family of David, as the prophets frequently and clearly did avouch ; for he was, as Isaiah said, *to be a rod out* Isa. xi. 1. *of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch going out of* Jer. xxiii. 5. *his roots ; a righteous Branch*, according to Jeremiah, *whom God would raise to David*. He whom Solomon (that most wise, peaceable, and prosperous prince, who raised that glorious temple, the emblem of God's church) did presignify ; and in whom the promises made to David concerning the perpetuity of his throne should be made good ; *There shall not fail thee a man, &c.—Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee ; thy throne shall be established for ever* ; especially Ps. lxxxix. that absolute and irrevocable promise ratified by 3. cxxxii. 11. God's oath ; *I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne unto all generations* : who consequently by 1. Jer. xxxiii. 17, 21, 22. 2. Matt. xxii. 26. Hos. iii. 5. 3. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. 4. Matt. xii. 23. 5. John vii. 42. reason of conjunction in blood, and mutual representation, David prefiguring him, and he by succession into the imperial right expressing David, is by several of the prophets (by Jeremiah, by Ezekiel, by Hosea) called David : whence the learned among the Jews did consent, that the Messias was to be the Son of David ; *How say the Scribes, that Christ is the Son of David ? and, What think ye of Christ ? whose son is he ?* (it is our Lord's question to the Pharisees;) *They say unto him, The Son of David.* Yea the people were generally informed herein, and possessed with this sentiment ; *Hath not the scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David ?* was a popular speech in St. John. *And all the* Matt. xii. 23.

SERM. *people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?* Now accordingly that Jesus came out of this country, tribe, and family, (that he was, as St. Luke ii. 4. Luke speaketh, *of the house and lineage of David*, Matt. i. 20. both according to natural and legal succession,) the Luke i. 32, express affirmation of angels, the positive attestation of his parents and kindred, (who best knew,) the genealogies (according to the manner of those times and that nation) carefully preserved, and produced by the evangelists, do assure us; neither doth it appear that Jesus's adversaries did ever contest this point, but seem by their silence to have granted it, as easily and evidently proveable by authentic records and testimonies.

More precisely yet for the *place* of the Messias's birth, it was to be the town of Bethlehem; so the prophet Micah foretold; thus cited by St. Matthew: Mich. v. 2. *Thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.* So from thence did the learned judge; for Matt. ii. 5. being consulted by king Herod *where Christ was to be born*, they answered that *in Bethlehem*: and so also did the people commonly believe, as appears John viii. 42. by the foresaid passage in St. John; *Hath not the scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?* Now that Jesus should be there born, God himself took especial care, ordering it by his providence, that by imperial edict the world should be taxed, or registered; and that in order thereto the parents of Jesus should be forced to go from a distant place of their habitation unto Bethlehem, the place of their stock and family; that so both Jesus

might be born there, and that good circumstance SERM.
might appear certain by the unquestionable testi- XVII.
mony of the census tables, unto which (extant even
in their times) Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and St.
Chrysostom refer those, who would be certified in
that particular^k.

That place also of his parents' abode in Nazareth
of Galilee, upon which was consequent his first ap-
pearance in way of action, was so ordered, as to an-
swer ancient predictions ; according to which it was
said, that *in the land of Zabulon and Nephthali, by Isa. ix. 1, 2.
the way of the sea, beyond Jordan in Galilee of the Matt. iv. 15.
nations, the people that walked in darkness did see
a great light, and they that dwelt in the land of
the shadow of death, upon them the light shined.*

The manner also of the Messias's birth, was, as
became such a Person, to be very extraordinary, and
different from the common generation of men : for
he was not only to be *one like the Son of man*, as Dan. vii. 13.
the prophet Daniel terms him, and indeed *the Son
of David*, as all the prophecies declare of him, but
the Son of God also ; for, *Thou art my Son, this day Ps. ii. 7, 12.*
have I begotten thee, saith God of him in the se-
cond Psalm. And that which in the first less per-
fect sense was said of Solomon, (who prefigured
him,) was, according to a more sublime meaning,
and more exactly, to agree unto him : *He shall be* ^{1 Chron.}
my son, and I will be his father ; and I will esta- ^{xviii. 10.}
blish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever : <sup>2 Sam. vii.
13.</sup>
Also I will make him my first-born, higher than <sup>Ps. lxxxix.
27.</sup>
the kings of the earth : and accordingly we see,

¹ Κέμη δὲ τις ἐστιν ἐν τῷ χώρῳ Ἰουδαίων σταδίους λε' Ἱεροσολύμων, ἐν
ἡ ἡγεῖθη Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ὃς καὶ μαθεῖν δύνασθε ἐκ τῶν ἀναγραφῶν &c.
Just. Martyr. Apol. 2. Tertull. in Marc. iv. 19.

SERM. that the Jews (both the wiser and the vulgar sort) did suppose that he should be *the Son of God*; so St. John the Baptist, so Nathanael, so Martha, so St. Peter, and the other apostles, when they became persuaded that Jesus was the Christ, did presently, according to anticipation of judgment common to them with the people, confess him to be *the Son of God*; the high priest himself intimated the same, when he asked Jesus, *Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?* Yea, the devils themselves were learned and orthodox in this point; who cried out, *Thou art the Christ the Son of God.* Now that, according to those prophecies and those traditions, the Messias should be in a more than ordinary way, and (for the justifying of God's truth together with the satisfying men) should evidently appear to be the Son of God, it was requisite (at least convenient) that his birth should be procured by divine operation, without concurrence of a human father; (how otherwise, at least how better, could it be apparent that he was both the *Son of God and of man?*) ¹ It was consequently either necessary or fit that he should be born of a virgin: and that he should indeed be so born the prophet Isaiah did signify, when he said, *The Lord himself shall give you a sign,* (that is, shall perform somewhat very remarkable and strange: what was that?) *Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel;* which prophecy that it belonged to the Messias appears from the report and description which follows in the continuation of this

¹ — Εἰ μὲν σημεῖον ἔστι τὸ διδόμενον, παράδοξος ἔστω καὶ ἡ γέννησις εἰ δὲ κοινὸς ὁ τρόπος τῆς γεννήσεως τοῦ παιδίου, μῆτε σημεῖον λεγέσθω. Bas. in Isa. vii.

particular prophecy concerning this child : *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful,* &c. which description questionless appertaineth to the Messias. The same prophet signifies the same concerning him, when he introduceth him speaking thus ; *And now, saith the Lord, that formed me from the womb to be his servant,* &c. Now that Jesus in correspondence to this admirable character was born of a virgin, his parents (persons of unblameable integrity and innocence ; so that even the adversaries of Jesus appear not ever to have offered to impeach them of imposture, or to have troubled them about this report coming from them) did constantly aver, angels did attest to their report, and God himself at several times by audible voices from heaven declared Jesus to be *his beloved Son.*

The state and condition also, in which the Messias was first to appear, was described to be a state of external meanness and obscurity, of poverty and wretchedness, in the eye of man : a state indeed most convenient and proper for a spiritual King, a most holy Priest, an absolute Prophet ; who was to teach, exercise, and exemplify the most rough and harsh pieces of righteousness and piety, (contempt of worldly vanities and pleasures ; all sorts of self-denial and abstinence ; the virtues of meekness, humility, and patience;) who was to manage and execute his great undertakings, not by natural or human force, but by a virtue supernatural and divine ; whose power consequently would be more conspicuous in a state of visible meanness and impotency, than in a condition of worldly splendour and

SERM. strength; that also which he was to merit from
 XVII. God, and to undergo for the sake of men, doth argue
 the same: that such the Messias's state was to be,
 there are divers mystical intimations in the ancient
 scripture; but the prophet Isaiah speaks it out most

^{Isa. liii. 2.} plainly: *He shall grow up* (says he, describing that
 state) *before the Lord like a tender plant, and as*
a root out of a dry ground; he hath no form nor
comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is
no beauty that we should desire him. And again;

^{Isa. xlix. 7.} *Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and*
kis Holy One; To him whom man despiseth, to
him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of
rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall
worship.

^{Phil. iii. 7.} Now that Jesus appeared thus in a poor, servile,
^{2 Cor. viii. 9.} and despicable condition, we need not for to prove;
 for as his followers avow it, so his adversaries are
 most ready to grant it; in the haughtiness of their
 conceit taking it for an advantage against him, it

^{Matt. xiii. 55.} proves a scandal to them. *Is not this the carpenter's*
^{Mark vi. 3.} *son? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?*

said they; and they were offended at him. Hence
^{Isa. liii. 3.} was it, that, as the prophet foretold, *he was de-*
spised and rejected of men, and they esteemed him
not. Thus all the circumstances of the Messias's
 coming were answered by those of Jesus.

Now concerning the qualities and endowments of
 the Messias, which constitute his personal character,
 they are, as was expedient, such as should dispose
 and fit him for the discharge of his great employment
 and duty with utmost advantage, and especial de-
 cency: in general, he was to be endued with super-
 eminent piety and sanctity, with perfect innocence

and integrity ; so it is implied in all the descriptions SERM. of his person and performances : *The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre : thou lovest righteous- Ps. xlv. 6, 7.* ness, and hatest iniquity ; wherefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows, said the Psalmist of him, and, *Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins,* Isa. xi. 5. *and faithfulness the girdle of his reins,* said Isaiah of him, (denoting the ready disposition of his mind to do whatever was good :) and, *He had done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his lips,* Isa. liii. 8. saith the same prophet of him again. Some particular virtues and abilities are also ascribed to him in an eminent degree : excellent wisdom and knowledge in spiritual matters, thus represented by Isaiah : *The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord ; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.* Eloquence also, skill and aptitude to instruct men ; which that most evangelical prophet thus sets forth : *The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.* That he should be meek, and gentle, and compassionate toward men, in regard to their infirmities and afflictions ; mild and lowly in his conversation, the prophets also signify : *He shall, Isa. xl. 11.* saith Isaiah, *feed his flock like a shepherd ; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young :* *A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench :* Isa. xlii. 3. Matt. xii. 20. and, *Behold, saith Zechariah, thy King cometh unto Zech. ix. 9.* Matt. xxv. 5.

SER.M. *thee ; he is just, and having salvation ; lowly, and riding upon an ass.* That he should be of a quiet and peaceable disposition, nowise fierce or contentious, turbulent or clamorous, Isaiah declares, thus

Isa. xlii. 2. Matt. xii. 19. saying of him, (as St. Matthew cites him;) *He shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.* To his admirable patience in bearing afflictions and contumelies, Isaiah thus renders express testimony ; *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth ; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearer is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.* And, *I gave my back to the smiter, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair : I hid not my face from shame and spitting.* His invincible courage and resolution in God's service, together with his strong confidence in God and entire submission to God's will, is thus described by the

Isa. l. 7. 5. same prophet : *The Lord God, saith he, will help me ; therefore I shall not be confounded ; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.—The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.* His general goodness and boundless charity toward men, the nature of his office and design, together with the whole course and tenor of his practice, such as they are represented, do suppose and imply.

Now that Jesus (our Lord) did in his person fully correspond, and did by his practice thoroughly make good this moral high character ; the story of his life with admirable simplicity and sincerity, without any semblance of disguise or artifice, represented by persons who most intimately were acquainted and long

conversed with him, (or by persons immediately informed by them,) and with greatest constancy attested to and maintained by them, doth plainly shew; wherein his incomparable piety toward God, his readiness to fulfil all righteousness, his entire submission and resignation of himself to God's will, the continual fervency, (devotion of all kinds, prayer, thanksgiving, fasting, practised in the most intense degree and in the most reverent manner,) his pure and ardent zeal for God's glory, his steadfast resolution, and indefatigable industry in God's service, (making it his meat to do the will of him that sent him, and to perform his work.)

Wherein an unspotted innocence, not only exempted from the vices and defilements, but raised above the vanities and impertinences of the world; secured by a magnanimous contempt, or neglect and abstinence from all worldly grandeur and splendour; all secular wealth and profit, all bodily delight and ease, wherein an admirable wisdom and prudence, expressed in all his demeanour and his discourse; in his discerning the secret thoughts and dissembled intentions of men; in his declaring and defending truth, detecting and confuting errors; in baffling learned and wily opposers; in eluding captious questions, and evading treacherous designs; in not meddling with the secular affairs and interests of men; in not encumbering himself with the needless cares and occupations of this life, nor entangling himself in the snares of this world; in dexterously accommodating his behaviour and his speech to the dispositions, the capacities, the needs of men; to the circumstances of things and exigencies of occasion, so as did best conduce to the promoting his great

SER M.
XVII.

Matt. iii. 15.
Heb. x. 7.

John xviii.

^{11.} xii. 27.

Matt. xxvi.

^{39.} Matt. xiv.

^{23.} xix. 13.

^{21.} xxi. 21.

^{25.} ix. 14.

Luke vi. 12.

^{xxii. 32,} 41,

^{42.} xxiii. 34.

John xvii.

^{1,} 6, ^{11,} 7.

^{xii. 41,} vi. 11.

John iv. 34.

^{vi.} 31. viii.

^{29.} v. 30.

^{ix. 4.} xv. 10.

xvii. 4.

Matt. viii.

^{20.}

² Cor. viii. 9.

Luke ii. 40,

^{52.}

Matt. ix. 4.

^{xii.} 10, ^{25.}

^{xxii.} 18.

^{xvi.} 1. xix.

^{3,} xxii. 18,

^{35,} 46.

John viii. 6.

Matt. xxi.

^{27.} xxii. 18.

^{34.}

John vi. 1.

^{viii.} 6. x. 39.

Luke xx. 3.

^{xxii. 4.} xxx.

^{12,} 24.

Matt. xii.

^{14.} xix. 5.

Mark viii.

^{30.}

Luke xiii.

^{14.} xiii. 2.

^{xiv.} 7, 12.

^{xviii.} 17.

^{xix.} 11.

John vii. 6.

^{xvi.} 4, 12.

^{xi.} 54. xvi.

^{27.} iv. 10.

SERM. design and undertaking ; so that the people, observing

XVII. his proceedings, could not but be astonished, and

Matt. xiii. ask, *Whence hath this man this wisdom?* so that

Mark vii. they could not but acknowledge, *He hath done all*

37. *things well.*

vii. 15. 46.

Matt. vii. 28. Wherein particularly an excellent faculty of speak-

Luke ii. 47. ing and teaching, of interpreting and applying the

iv. 42.

John viii. holy scriptures, of proving and persuading God's

40. vii. 25,

truth, whereby he drew the people after him, con-

Luke xx. 46.

xiii. 52. xvi. verted many of them to amendment of life, con-

15.

Matt. xii. vinced the most averse and incredulous ; so that *all*

14. xv. 13.

xxiii. 19. *that heard him were amazed at his understanding*

xv. 6. 14.

viii. 24.

Luke xix.

and answers ; so that all bare witness, and won-

45. *dered at the gracious words which proceeded out*

John ii. 15. *of his mouth ; so that the officers sent to apprehend*

Luke ix. 22.

51. xviii. 32. *him did confess, Never man spake like this man.*

xxii. 15.

Matt. xvi. Wherein an invincible fortitude and gallantry,

21. xx. 17.

expressed in his most constant profession and un-

Mark x. 33.

daunted maintenance of truth and goodness ; in his

encountering the prejudices, detecting the frauds,

reproving the vices of the age, though upheld by

the greatest persons and by prevalent factions ; in his

plain dealing and free speaking with all sincerity

and all authority, in his zealous checking and chas-

tising profane abuses ; in his disregarding the rash

and fond opinions of men, their spiteful obloquies,

harsh censures, slanderous imputations, and unjust

reproaches ; in his foreseeing the greatest of dangers

and worst of mischiefs that could arrive to man, yet

cheerfully encountering and firmly sustaining them ;

sustaining all the violent oppositions and assaults

which the most virulent malice and envy inflamed

with superstition and blind zeal could set against

him.

Wherein a most quiet and peaceable disposition, SERM. apparent from his never attempting any resistance, XVII. or any revenge upon provocation of frequent great affronts and injuries ; from his never raising any tumults, nor fomenting any quarrels, nor meddling¹⁴ with any litigious matters, nor encroaching upon any man's right or office ; by his ready compliance with received customs, by his paying tribute, al- though not due from him, to prevent offence ; by his frequent instructions and exhortations to peace, to innocence, to patience, to due obedience, to performing due respect to superiors, and paying customs to governors ; to the yielding a docile ear, and an observance to those who *sat in Moses's chair*.

Wherein an exceeding meekness and gentleness, demonstrated in all his conversation ; in resenting very moderately, or rather not resenting at all, most unjust hatreds, outrageous calumnies, bitter reproaches and contumelies from his adversaries ; very perverse neglects and ingratitudes from multitudes of people ; many infirmities, stupidities, distrusts, basenesses, and treacheries from his own nearest friends and followers. In his passing over and easily pardoning the greatest offences committed against him, yea sometime extenuating and excusing them. In the mildness of his censures, expos- tulations, and reproofs ; in his tempering the fierce zeal, hard censure, and rigorous proceeding against persons unhappy, or faulty ; in his tender pity of all persons in any want, distress, or trouble ; in his earnest commiseration and bewailing the vengeance he foresaw impendent on his persecutors, and in his praying for their pardon.

Wherein a marvellous humility and lowliness of

S E R M. mind expressed by his not seeking honour or applause from men, but shunning and rejecting it; his

John v. 41. not assuming to himself, but ascribing all to God,
viii. 50, 54. and referring all to his glory, by his making no ostentation of his miraculous power and high endowments, but, so far as would comport with the prosecution of his main purpose, (the glory and service of God, the good and welfare of men,) carefully suppressing them; in his without dissatisfaction or discouragement bearing scorn, and contempt, and obloquy; in his willing condescension to the meanest offices and employments; in his free and familiar conversation with all sorts of people, with the lowest and most desppicable, with the worst and most odious, for their good; he not despising the poorest or vilest wretch, who seemed capable of receiving any benefit from him; in his easiness to be entreated, and readiness to comply with the desires of any man imploring succour or relief from him; in his being ready, not only to oblige, but to be obliged and receive courtesies from any man; to answer the invitation of a Pharisee or of a Publican; to accept favourably the well-intended respect of a poor woman; in the softness and sweetness of his language to all men, particularly to his disciples;

Luke xii. 4. *John xv. 14.* *xiii. 33.* *Be of good courage, daughter; Son, be of good cheer; I say unto you, my friends; Little children, I am a little while with you.* Such was his style and conversation toward his inferiors.

Wherein an unparalleled patience in contentedly and cheerfully, through all the course of his life, undertaking and undergoing whatever by God's will and providence was imposed on him, how grievous and distasteful soever to human apprehension or

sense ; the extremest penury, the hardest toil, the SERM. vilest disgraces, the most bitter pains and anguishes XVII. incident to body or mind, the most horrid and most ^(2 Cor. viii. 9.) sorrowful of deaths, all these aggravated by the conscience of his own clearest innocence, by the extreme ingratitude of those who misused him, by the sense of God's displeasure for the sin of man, by all the imbibing considerations which a most lively piety and tender charity suggested ; in submitting to all this most freely and most calmly, without any regret, any disturbance.

Wherein an unexpressible and unconceivable charity, (*a charity indeed which surpasseth knowledge*, as St. Paul speaketh,) evidenced in the constant strain and tenor of his whole life, passing through all his designs, all his words, and all his actions : for διῆλθεν εὐεργετῶν, as St. Peter says in the Acts, he did nothing else, but *go about doing good*, ^{Acts x. 38.} and benefiting men ; curing their diseases, relieving ^{Matt. iv. 23.} ix. 35. their wants, instructing their minds, reforming their manners, drawing them to God and goodness, disposing them to the attainment of everlasting bliss and salvation. It is love, we may observe, which was the soul, that animated and actuated him in all things ; which carried him with unwearied resolution and alacrity through all the cruel hardships and toils, through all the dismal crosses and ignominies he endured : his life was in effect but one continual expression of charity, (differently exerting itself according to various opportunities, and circumstances, and needs of men,) the which was consummated, and sealed by his death ; the highest instance of charity that could be ; for, *Greater love hath no man* ^{John xv. 13.}

SERM. *man than this, that a man lay down his life for XVII. his friend.*

Wherein, finally, (in which life, I say, of Jesus,) all holiness, all virtue, all goodness (suitable to him, who was to be not only the teacher and the persuader of the best life, but a living standard and pattern thereof; who was to merit of God in man's behalf, to conciliate God's favour towards us, and appease his anger against us) do shine and sparkle with a beauty and a lustre transcending all expression. All which particulars might, were it now proper and seasonable, be thoroughly declared by instances extant in the evangelical history. So that the characteristical qualities of the Messias do clearly and abundantly agree to Jesus our Lord.

His performances should next be considered and compared; but the time doth not admit that we should now proceed any further.

Rev. v. 13. *Now, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.*

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N XVIII.

THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

Acts ix. 22.

But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ.

IN conformity to St. Paul's design and practice SERM. implied here, I have formerly propounded to explain XVIII. and persuade these particulars. 1. What is the right notion and reason of this name or title, *Christ*. 2. That there was destinated to come into the world a Person, who signally, according to that right notion, should be *the Christ*. 3. That Jesus, whom we avow, is that Person, *the very Christ*. 4. In what manner, and upon what accounts, the New Testament representeth Jesus to be *the Christ*. 5. What application the point requireth.

In prosecution of which particulars, having despatched the first and second, I did enter into the third, which is of highest consequence, beginning to declare that Jesus, our Lord, is *the Christ*, from the circumstances of his coming into the world, and from his personal qualifications; which having in

SER.M. some measure performed, I shall now proceed to
XVIII. declare the same from the exact correspondency of his undertakings and performances to those, which, according to ancient presignifications and prophecies, the Messias was designed to undertake and accomplish ; together with the consequences of what the Messias was to do, and what answerably Jesus did effect.

1. One great performance of the Messias was, by inspiration and in the name of God, to make a complete discovery of divine truth ; to publish a law of universal and perpetual obligation ; to institute a religion consummate in all respects, which should correct the faults and supply the defects of all precedent dispensations, which should therefore be, as it were, God's last will and testament, after which Deut. xviii. no other revelation was to be expected : *I will*, said ^{18, 19.} Moses of him, *put words into his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I command him; and it shall come to pass, that whoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him:* by him Isaiah foretold, that *God shall teach us of his ways, and we shall walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of God from Jerusalem:* by him Jeremiah signified, that *God would put his law into the inward parts of men, and write it in their hearts;* it was, as it is said in Daniel, part ^{33.} Ezek. xxxvi. ^{27.} of his work *to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy;* and his days in the prophets are commonly styled *the last days*, because, it seemeth, of the perfection of his doctrine, and immutability of his law ; where such an entire instruction and final resolution in all points

was commonly expected by the Jews, as the Samaritan woman did intimate; *I know*, said she, according to the current persuasion then, *that the Messias cometh; and when he shall come, he will tell us all things.*

SE R.M.
XVIII.

John iv. 25.

Now accordingly Jesus (*our hope, and author of our faith*) hath taught a doctrine, hath proclaimed a law, hath instituted a religion, which upon strict and careful examination will be found most perfect in all respects; such in its nature as cannot but indispensably oblige all that understand it; such as is worthy of God, and suitable to his designs of glorifying himself, and obliging his creature; in short, he hath been author of such an institution, as may be demonstrated the most excellent and complete that can be. For (briefly to shew this by considering the main, if not all imaginable excellencies of any religion, law, or doctrine) it is impossible that any doctrine should assign a more true, proper, complete notion or character of God himself, more congruous to what reason dictateth, the works of nature declare, the purest tradition attesteth, or common experience doth intimate concerning God; more apt to breed in our hearts the highest affection and reverence toward him, or to engage us in the strictest practice of duty and obedience to him; none can ascribe unto God higher perfections of nature, can more assert unto him all his due rights and prerogatives, can better command and justify to us all his actions and proceedings, can represent him more amiable in his goodness, more terrible in his justice, more glorious and venerable in all his ways of providence; can consequently better direct or dispose us to render unto him a worship worthy of him and

SERM. acceptable to him; can also therefore with more security and advantage commend unto us the imitation of him in our disposition and demeanour.

Nor could any doctrine more clearly and fully inform us concerning ourselves; concerning our nature, our original, our end, all our state, past, present, final; what the dignity of our nature is, for what purposes we were designed and framed, wherein our happiness doth consist, what shall be our state after death, how we shall be judged and dealt with then; the knowledge of which particulars is of so immense consequence, for the satisfaction of our minds and direction of our lives; concerning which therefore men in all times have so earnestly inquired and disputed, without any sure resolution but from hence.

Nor could a more accurate rule of life (more congruous to reason and suitable to our nature, or perfective thereof; more conducive to our welfare and our content; more apt to procure each man's private good, and to promote the public benefit of all) have been prescribed; nothing can be more just, or comely, or pleasant, or beneficial to us, than are the duties of piety (consisting in love, reverence, gratitude, devotion, obedience, faith and repentance toward God) which Christianity doth require. No directions concerning our deportment toward our neighbours and brethren can be imagined comparable to those (those of hearty love, good-will, beneficence, compassion, readiness to forgive, meekness, peaceableness, and the like) which the Christian law enjoineth. No precepts or advices concerning the management of ourselves (the ordering our souls and our bodies in their respective functions and frui-

tions) can be devised more agreeable to sound reason, more productive of true welfare and real delight unto us, than are those of being humble and modest in our conceits, calm and composed in our passions, sober and temperate in our enjoyments, patient and contented in our state, with the like, which the Christian doctrine doth inculcate. No other method can raise us up so near to heaven and happiness as that which we here learn, of abstracting and elevating our minds above the fading glories, the unstable possessions, the vanishing delights of this world ; the fixing our thoughts, affections, and hopes upon the concernments of a better future state.

No religion also can be purer from superstitious alloys, or freer from useless encumbrances, (or from, as Tertullian calleth them, *busy scrupulosityes*,) than Negotiorum scrupulosityes. Tert. in Marc. lib. ii. is this, (such as it is in its native simplicity, and as it came from its Author, before the pragmatical curiosities, or domineering humour, or covetous designs of men had tampered with it,) it only requiring a rational and spiritual service, consisting in performance of substantial duties plainly necessary or profitable ; the ritual observances it enjoineth being, as very few in number, in nature simple and easy to observe, so evidently reasonable, very decent and very useful, able to instruct us in, apt to excite us to, the practice of most wholesome duties.

No religion also can have the like advantage of setting before us a living copy and visible standard of good practice, affording so compendious an instruction, and so efficacious an incitement to all piety and virtue : so absolutely perfect, so purposely designed, so fitly accommodated for our imitation, and withal so strongly engaging us thereto, as the

SERM. example of Jesus our Lord, such as it is in the Gos-
XVIII. pels represented to us.

Neither can any religion build our duty upon more solid grounds, or draw it from better principles, or drive it to better ends, or press it with more valid inducements than ours ; which builds it upon conformity to the perfect nature of God, and to the dictates of his infallible wisdom, upon the holy will and most just authority of our natural Lord and Maker ; which draweth it from love, reverence, and gratitude to God, from a hearty good-will to men, and from a sober regard to our own true welfare ; which propoundeth God's honour, our neighbour's edification, and our own salvation, as the principal ends of action ; which stirreth up good practice by minding us, that we shall thereby resemble God, express our thankfulness, and discharge our duty to him, obtain his mercy and favour, acquire present comfort of mind and future bliss, avoid regrets of conscience here, and endless torments hereafter.

Neither can any doctrine afford more encouragements to the endeavours of practising it than doth this, which tendereth sufficient help and ability toward the performance of whatever it enjoineth ; offering (upon our seeking them or asking for them) God's infallible wisdom to direct us in our darknesses and doubts, God's almighty strength to assist us in our temptations and combats, God's loyng spirit to comfort us in our afflictions and distresses.

Nor can any doctrine in a more sure or kindly manner appease and satisfy a man's conscience, so as to produce therein a well-grounded hope and solid comfort ; to heal the wounds of bitter remorse and anxious fear, which the sense of guilt doth in-

flict, than doth this, which assureth us, that God SERM.
Almighty, notwithstanding all our offences com- XVIII.
mitted against him, is not only reconcilable to us,
but desirous to become our friend; that he doth
upon our repentance, and compliance with his gen-
tle terms, receive us unto perfect grace and favour,
discharging all our guilts and debts, however con-
tracted; that our endeavours to serve and please
God, although imperfect and defective, if serious
and sincere, shall be accepted and rewarded by
him.

Such is the doctrine, law, and religion of Jesus; expressed in a most unaffected and perspicuous way, with all the gravity and simplicity of speech, with all the majesty and authority of proposal becoming divine truth; so excellent, and so complete in all respects, that it is beyond the imagination of man to conceive any thing better, yea, I dare say, repug-
nant to the nature of things that there should be any other way of religion (different substantially from it) so very good. God himself, we may pre-
sume to say, cannot infuse truer notions concerning himself or concerning us, cannot reveal more noble or more useful truths; cannot prescribe better laws or rules, cannot afford more proper means and aids, cannot propound more equal and reasonable terms, cannot offer higher encouragements and rewards, cannot discover his mind in a more excellent way than he hath done by Jesus, for his own glory and service, for our benefit and happiness: so that hence we may reasonably infer, that the doctrine taught, the law promulgated, the religion instituted by Je-
sus in God's name, are the very same which the pre-
dictions concerning the Messias do refer unto, as

SERM. the last which should ever come from God, most full
XVIII. and perfect, universally and perpetually obliging.

2. Thus in general the prophets speake concerning the Messias's doctrine, and so that of Jesus correspondeth thereto : but of that doctrine particularly it was signified, that it should be very comfortable, joyful, and acceptable to mankind ; as containing a declaration (peculiar thereto) of God's kind and gracious intentions toward us, overtures of especial mercy and love, dispensations of all sorts of spiritual blessings ; the pardon and abolition of sins committed, peace and satisfaction of conscience, deliverance from spiritual slaveries and captivities ; *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem : behold, thy King cometh unto thee :* so Zechariah speaketh of his coming, and implieth the joyful purport of his message : and, *How beautiful, saith Isaiah, upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace ; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation ; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth !* and, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me ; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek ; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound ; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance, or of recompense, as the LXX. render it, of our God ; to comfort all that mourn ; to give unto them that mourn in Zion beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.* It is a part of what God in Jeremiah promised to dispense by him ; *I will forgive their iniquity, and I*

Isa. lxi. 1.
xliii. 1, 3.

Jer. xxxi. 34.

will remember their sin no more. It is one of the SERM. XVIII.
Messias's performances, *to finish transgression, and*
to make an end of sins, and to make reconcilia-
tion for iniquity ; to sprinkle clean water on God's Dan. ix. 24.
Ezek. xxxvi. 25,
people, and to save them from their uncleannesses. Isa. xliv. 3.
xliii. 25.
In fine, the prophet Zechariah saith of his time, that
in that day there shall be a fountain opened to the ^{29.} Zech. xiii.
house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusa-
lem for sin and for uncleanness.

Now to all this the preaching of Jesus did exactly correspond; it being indeed, as it was named, a gospel, or message of good and joy; declaring the special good-will of God, and his merciful willingness to be reconciled to mankind; offering peace and pardon to all that are sensible of their guilt, and penitent for their sin; imparting rest, comfort, and liberty to all that are weary and afflicted with spiritual burdens, grievances, and slaveries; taking off all grievous yokes of superstition, servility, and sin; and in their stead imposing a no less sweet and pleasant, than just and reasonable obedience; ministering all sorts of blessings needful for our succour, relief, ease, Acts xv. 32.
Rom. v. 13.
Rom. xiv. content, and welfare; wholly breathing sweetest love, ^{17.}
Gal. v. 22. (all kinds of love; love between God and man, between man and man, between man and his own conscience;) filling the hearts of those who sincerely embrace and comply with it, with present joy, and raising in them gladsome hopes of future bliss. It was indeed the most joyous sound that ever entered into man's ears, the most welcome news that ever was reported upon earth; news of a certain and perfect salvation from all the enemies of our welfare, from all the causes of mischief and misery to us; well therefore deserving that auspicious gratulation

SERM. from the angel—*Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.*

Luke ii. 10. 3. Collateral unto, or coincident with, those performances, (the teaching such a doctrine, publishing such a law, dispensing such blessings,) was the formal institution and establishment of a new, everlasting covenant, (different from all precedent covenants, and swallowing them up in its perfection,) a covenant between God and man, wherein God, entering into a most strict alliance and relation with us, should be pleased to dispense the blessings of spiritual illumination and assistance, of mercy and favour, of salvation and felicity; wherein we in way of condition, according to obligations of justice and gratitude, should engage to return unto God by hearty repentance, and to persist in faithful obedience to him: of such a covenant the Messias was to be the messenger and mediator, or *the angel* thereof, (as the prophet Malachi speaketh, alluding, it seems, to that angel of God's presence, who ordained the Jewish law, and conducted the Israelites toward the promised land;) of which covenant and its mediator, God in *Gal. iii. 19.* *Isaiah* thus spake: *I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and I will hold thine hand, and I will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house:* and of the same he again; *Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David—Behold, I have given him a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people:* so in general he speaketh

thereof, and inviteth thereto: then a special part SERM. thereof he expresseth thus; *Let the wicked man* XVIII. *forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his* ^{Isa. iv. 7.} *thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God,* and he will abundantly pardon. Of the same covenant God in Ezekiel speaketh thus; *I will set up* ^{Ezek.} *one shepherd over them—and I will make with them* ^{xxxiv. 23.} *a covenant of peace, and it shall be an everlasting* ^{25. xxxvii.} *covenant with them—and I will set my sanctuary* ^{26. xxxvi.} *in the midst of them for evermore—they shall also* ^{26, &c.} *walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.* Of the same, God thus declarereth in Jeremiah, most fully and plainly reckoning the particular blessings tendered therein: *Behold, the days* ^{Jer. xxxi.} *come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah;* ^{31, &c.} *not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more:* which words signify the tenor of that covenant on God's part to import, that God would impart a full and clear discovery of his will unto them, whom it should concern; that he would afford to them all requisite means and helps, quali-

SER.M. fying them for the performance of their duty ; that
XVIII. he would bestow on them (complying with the terms
of this covenant, and performing their duty) an entire
remission of all their sins, with an assurance of
his constant and perpetual favour.

Now that Jesus did institute such a covenant, wherein all the benefits promised on God's part, and all the duties required on our parts, do punctually correspond to the terms of that predesigned by the prophets, is apparent by the whole tenor of the

Luke xxiv. Christian gospel ; wherein a full declaration of God's

47. will is held forth, so that no man (except out of

Acts v. 31. ii. 38. wilfulness or negligence) can be ignorant thereof ;

Heb. x. 29. wherein, upon condition of faith and repentance,

God's mercy and pardon are exhibited and offered to all ; wherein the communication of God's holy Spirit of grace (for directing and assisting the embracers of this covenant in the practice of their duty) is promised and dispensed ; wherein on our part faith in God (or heartily returning to him) and faithful observance of God's laws are required ; wherein God declareth a most favourable regard and love (together with very near and endearing relations) to those who undertake and conform to his terms ; of which

Heb. ix. 15. new covenant Jesus is represented the Angel, the

xii. 24. vii. Mediator, the Sponsor ; having by his preaching de-

22. viii. 6. clared it, by his merits and intercessions purchased

1 Tim. ii. 5. and procured it, by his blood ratified and assured it to us.

4. In coincidence also with those performances, it is declared that the Messias should erect a kingdom spiritual in nature, universal in extent, and perpetual in duration ; by the power and virtue whereof the enemies of God's people should be curbed and quel-

led ; the subjects of which should live together in SERM. amity and peace, in safety and prosperity ; wherein XVIII. truth and righteousness should gloriously flourish. The chief testimonies of ancient scripture predicting this kingdom I had occasion before to mention, and shall not repeat them now ; only concerning the nature and extent thereof I shall add somewhat, serving for illustration and proof of our main purpose.

That it was to be a spiritual kingdom (not a visible dominion over the bodies and estates of men, managed by external force and co-action, but a government of men's hearts and consciences by secret inspirations, and moral instructions or persuasions) may be several ways collected and argued : it appeareth from the temper and disposition of its Founder, who was to be *a Prince of Peace* ; of a Isa. ix. 6. peaceable, meek, patient, and humble disposition : it may be inferred from his condition, which was not to be a state of external grandeur and magnificence, but of poverty and affliction ; for he was to be as he is described, mean and despicable in appearance ; having *no form or comeliness, no beauty*, Isa. liii. 2. that when we should see him, we should desire 3,4,7. xlix. 7. l. 6. him ; being *a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief* : it also followeth from the events happening to him, which were not to conquer and triumph openly in view of carnal eyes ; but to be *despised* and rejected, to be afflicted, oppressed, and slaughtered by men ; the same we may learn from the manner of its establishment and propagation ; which was not to be effected by force and violence, but by virtue of a quiet and gentle instruction ; by reasonable words, not by hard blows : so doth the prophet signify, when he saith of the Messias, that, *with right-* Isa. xi. 4.

SERM. XVIII. *eousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth ; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked :* not by force of hands, or terror of arms, not in furious and bloody combats, but by the spiritual *rod of his mouth*, with the soft *breath of his lips* he was to *slay the wicked*, converting them unto righteousness :

Dan. ii. 44. so doth Daniel also imply when he saith, that *a stone cut out of the mountains without hands should break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms*. Yea the nature thereof itself doth argue the same ; for the laws enjoined and duties required, the blessings ministered and rewards propounded therein are purely spiritual, not relating to a temporal state, yea hardly consisting with secular domination ; as may appear by attending to its fundamental constitution, or to the covenant settled between the Prince and subjects thereof ; wherein the divine spirit and grace, light and knowledge, mercy and pardon for sins, comfort of mind, and peace of conscience, God's especial love and favour, things merely spiritual, are expressly promised ; but worldly power, wealth, and prosperity are pretermitted ; and thence may justly be presumed no ingredients or appurtenances thereof. Indeed the constitution of a temporal or worldly kingdom, with visible pomp and lustre, such as the Jews (a grossly conceited and sensually affected people) did, mistaking the prophets, desire and expect, had been a thing, as very agreeable to the carnal or childish opinions of men, so in reasonable esteem of no considerable value, benefit, or use to mankind : such a domination could only have concerned the mortal part and temporal state of man ;

it could only have procured some trivial conveniences for our bodies, or gratifications to our sense : the settlement also, and preservation of such a kingdom (according to that vast extent and long duration which the prophets imply) seemeth, without quite altering the whole frame of human nature, scarce possible ; and reasons there are obvious enough, why it would not be expedient or beneficial for men : but the founding and upholding a spiritual kingdom (such as we described) is evidently of inestimable benefit to the nobler and more divine part of men ; may serve to promote the eternal welfare of our souls ; may easily, without changing the natural appetites of men, or disturbing the world, be carried on any where, and subsist for ever by the occult influences of divine grace ; it consequently is most worthy of God to design and accomplish. Such a kingdom therefore was meant by the prophets, being indeed no other than a church, or society of persons, with unanimous consent heartily acknowledging the one true God of Israel, Maker of heaven and earth, for their Sovereign Prince and Lawgiver ; submitting themselves in all their actions to his laws and commands, expecting protection and recompense of their obedience from him.

As for the general extent of this kingdom, and the Messias's proceedings in settling and propagating it, that is also very perspicuously and copiously represented in the ancient prophets, who declare that by him mankind (then immersed in deep ignorance and error, in wretched impiety and wickedness, in utter estrangement and aversion from God and goodness) should be reduced to the knowledge, worship, and obedience of God ; that they should be

S E R M. received into God's protection, and should partake
 XVIII. of his special favour ; that all nations of men should
 by the Messias be enlightened with saving know-
 ledge, and converted to the practice of true right-
 eousness ; that all men every where (all that would
 regard and observe his word, all in God's design and
 desire, in effect a numerous company of men) should
 by his means be aggregated to God's church, and
 rendered God's people ; enjoying the benefits and
 privileges suitable to that state or relation : in ex-
 pressing these things the ancient scriptures are very
 pregnant and copious : Moses, in that most divine
 song (endited by God himself, and uttered in his
 name) which seemeth to contain the history and the
 continual fate of the Jewish people, doth foretell
 this, and concludeth his song therewith ; as with
 the last matter, which should happen during God's
 special relation to that people, importing the period

^{Deut. xxxii.} of Judaism, or of the Israelitish theocracy. *Rejoice,*

^{43.} *Rom. xv.* saith he, *O ye nations, with his people.* God in the

^{10.} *Psal. ii. 8.* second Psalm thus speaketh to the Messias : *Ask of*

*me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine in-
 heritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for*

^{Ps. lxxii. 17.} *thy possession :* and in the 72d Psalm ; *His name,*

^{viii. 1.} it is said, *shall endure for ever ; his name shall be*

*continued as long as the sun ; and men shall be
 blessed in him ; all nations shall call him blessed ;
 he shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and
 from the river to the ends of the earth :* and other-

Psal. xxii. 27. lxxxvi. 9. *where ; All the ends of the earth shall remember*

and turn unto the Lord ; and all the kindreds of

Isa. xlvi. 9. Acts xiii. 47. *the nations shall worship before thee : and, I will,*

*saith God in Isaiah concerning him, give thee for a
 light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salva-*

tion to the ends of the earth : and, *The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it:* *The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God:* and, *He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles (that is, the European nations) shall wait for his law:* and, *In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined;* and he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations : and, *In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek; and its rest shall be glorious:* and, *I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not; I said,* Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name : and, *It shall come to pass in the last days, say both Isaiah and Micah in the same words, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it:* and, *From the rising of the sun, saith God in Malachi, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering:* and, *I, saith God in Hosea, will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say unto them which were not my people, Thou art my people;*

SERM. XVIII.
Isa. xl. 5.
Is. liii. 10.
Luke iii. 6.
Isa. xlvi. 4.
Rom. xv. 2.
Isa. xxv. 6.
Isa. xi. 10.
Isa. lxv. 1.
Rom. ix. 24.
Isa. ii. 2.
Mic. iv. 1.
Mal. i. 11.
Hos. ii. 23.
i. 10.
Rom. ix.
26, 25.

SERM. and they shall say, *Thou art my God: in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people,*

^{XVIII.} *where it was said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God: and, The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, saith God to his church; the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee:*

¹*Isa. lx. 5. Isa. xlvi. 6. Fear not, for I am with thee; I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west;*

I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south,

¹*Isa. liv. 1.—Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my*

^{5.}*Gal. iv. 27. daughters from the ends of the earth: and, Sing,*

O barren, thou that didst not bear, it is said to the Gentile church; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child;

^{Vide Amos ix. 11, 12.} *for more are the children of the desolate than the*

^{Acta xv. 15.} *children of the married wife, saith the Lord: En-*

&c. large the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations—for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles—for thy Maker is thine husband, (the Lord of hosts is his name;) and thy Redeemer the Holy One of

^{Is. xxxv. 1.} *Israel; The Lord of the whole earth shall he be called—The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose, &c.*

Such is the nature and such the extent of the Messias's kingdom; now that Jesus hath erected and settled a kingdom of a spiritual and heavenly nature, (the which is therefore in his gospel styled the *kingdom of heaven*, the *kingdom of God*, the *kingdom of Christ*, the *kingdom that was to come*,) whereof God is the absolute Sovereign; the throne whereof is in heaven above, which beareth sway in

the souls of men ; wherein God governeth in effectual manner, (most righteously and sweetly, with admirable wisdom, justice, and clemency ; with mighty power also, and awful authority,) according to most excellent laws, by his holy word, and powerful spirit; proposing most precious rewards to the obedient subjects thereof, and threatening dreadful punishments to the rebellious ; protecting and saving the faithful people from all their enemies, (from the powers of darkness, from the temptations, allurements, menaces of the flesh and the world here, from death and hell hereafter;) that also Jesus (who, as Mediator between God and man, doth according to the gospel, by authority derived from God, and in God's name, administer the government hereof) hath in effect been avowed as Lord and King ; that his authority hath had great efficacy upon the minds and consciences of men ; what noble trophies over sin and wickedness his word hath raised ; in what glory and majesty through many ages he hath reigned, is evident from obvious records of history and from plain experience.

The extent of this spiritual empire raised by our Lord (of that doctrine which he taught, of that reformation which he introduced, of that church, or spiritual society, knit together in faith and charity, which he founded, of that whole dispensation which he managed) is also thoroughly commensurate to the extent of whatever in these kinds the Messias was to achieve : the empire of Jesus in its nature and design, according to right and obligation, is declared universal and boundless, coextended with the world itself, and comprehending all generations of men ; all nations being summoned to come under the

SERM. wings of its jurisdiction ; all persons being invited to XVIII. partake the benefits, and enjoy the privileges there-
 Acts x. 35. of : *The Lord, and Judge of all men* ; the *Saviour, and Redeemer of the world* ; the common *light of men*, and *Captain of human life* ; are titles, which Matt. xi. 27. Jesus assumed to himself : *All things are delivered John xvii. 2. to me of my Father* ; *Thou hast given him power v. 22. iii. 35. over all flesh* ; *All judgment is committed to the Matt. xxviii. 18. Son* ; yea, *All power is given unto me in heaven and earth*—such is the authority he claimeth and Mark xvi. asserteth to himself : *Going into the world, preach 15. Matt. the gospel to every creature* ; *Go, and discipline all xxviii. 19. Luke xxiv. 46. nations, baptizing them*—such was the commission and charge delivered by Jesus to his officers and min-
 Tit. ii. 11. isters : *The grace of God which bringeth salvation*
 Acts xvii. 30. *hath appeared to all men* ; *The times of ignorance God having winked at, doth now invite all men 2 Cor. v. 19. every where to repent* ; *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their 1 Tim. ii. 4. sins* ; *God our Saviour will have all men to be Col. i. 23. saved, and to come to the acknowledgment of the truth* ; *The gospel hath been preached to every creature under heaven*—so do the apostles declare the latitude of the evangelical dispensation according to its nature and design : so that well may we cry out with Clemens Alexandrinus, *Hearken ye that are afar off, hearken ye that are near ; the word is not hid from any, it is a common light, it shineth to all men ; there is no Cimmerian in respect to the gospel.* So in design and of right is Jesus's doctrine and dispensation common to all nations and to all persons ; all in duty are obliged to entertain it ; all Clem. Al. Protrept. may have the benefit thereof, who are fit and willing to embrace it ; it doth not indeed obtrude its benefits

Ακούετε οἱ μαν-
 γῆς, ἀκούει-
 τε οἱ λγγῖς,
 οὐκ ἐτρυπθέτε
 τοὺς ἀλόγους.
 φατὶ τοτὲ κο-
 νὲ, ιππάμ-
 ται πάσιν ἄν-
 θρώπαν.
 οὐδεὶς Καμψί-
 γεις ἐν λόγῳ.

upon unwilling, and thence unworthy persons; it SERM.
XVIII. useth no unkindly violence, or rude compulsion; but it alloweth, it inviteth, it entreateth, it engageth all men to come, excluding only those from a participation therein, who will not hear its call; who do not like or love it.

In effect also this kingdom hath been very large and vast, a considerable part of the world having very soon been subjugated by its virtue, and having submitted thereto. *As the lightning cometh out of* ^{Matt. xxiv.} *the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall* ^{27.} *the coming* (or presence) *of the Son of man be;* said he concerning the sudden and effectual spreading of his doctrine; and the event answered his prediction: for the evangelical light did in an instant dart itself all about, so as in many places to dispel the night of ignorance, and to dissipate the fogs of wickedness: so that *the utmost ends of the earth* (of which according to the most literal sense we ourselves are a most proper instance) are come under the possession and government of Jesus; are reduced to the acknowledgment and veneration of the only true God; do partake of God's favour, and hope in his mercy; do with good conscience (in that measure which is expectable from the natural infirmity and pravity of man, in various degrees, some more, some less strictly) serve God, and obey his laws: a church, and <sup>Chrys.
tom. vi. Or.
61. p. 634.</sup> spiritual Zion, (spread over divers regions and countries, consisting of several nations and languages,) compacted in good order and sweet communion, hath through a long course of time visibly flourished in competent degrees of peace, prosperity, and glory; commanding and cherishing true religion, charity, and sobriety; offering continual sacrifices of holy de-

SERM. votion unto God, celebrating the divine name and XVIII. praises; producing many noble examples of all piety and virtue; a church in all regards adequate to the prophetical expressions concerning that which was out of the whole world to be collected and constituted by the Messias.

5. If we do singly compare the particular consequences and successes of the Messias's performances, expressed by the prophets; we shall find an exact correspondence to what hath followed the undertakings and performances of our Lord.

They tell us, that great opposition should be made against it by the Jews and by the* Gentiles.
*Psal. ii. 1. Vid. Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61. p. 657. Ps. lxxii. 11, 17.

They tell us, that the Messias's person should be acknowledged, worshipped, and blessed all over the world; *All nations, say they, shall serve him,—all nations shall call him blessed:* this we see for almost seventeen hundred years abundantly performed in respect to Jesus, by the daily services of praise and thanksgiving yielded to him in the universal church.

They say, that the knowledge of God shall be far extended and diffused over the world; *The earth, say they, shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea:* this we see fulfilled by the large propagation of Christian doctrine.
Isa. xi. 9.

They affirm, that righteousness in the times of the Messias should commonly prosper, and be in high request, according to that; *In his days shall the righteous flourish:* so we see, that virtue and piety have, ever since Jesus commended them to the world, enjoyed much repute; having been practised among the professors of his religion in such degrees,
Ps. lxxii. 7.

and according to such manner, as the condition of SERM.
this world, the humours of men, and the nature of XVIII.
human affairs, do admit; nor reasonably can any
prophecies be understood to mean further.

They further intimate, that upon the entertainment of the Messias's doctrine and law, abundance of peace and concord, of love and charity, of innocence and justice, should ensue; so that the fellow-subjects of this kingdom, although of different states and complexions, (*the wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, the lion and the ox, the asp and the young child*; that is, the rich and the poor,^{Ps. lxxii. 7.} the mighty and the weak, the fierce and the gentle,^{lxxxv. 10.} the crafty and the simple sorts of men,) should live and converse together amicably, safely, and pleasantly, without molesting, wronging, oppressing, and devouring; but rather helping and benefiting each other; *They shall not*, saith the prophet, *hurt or destroy in all my holy mountaint*: to the making good of which particular, the doctrine of Jesus doth temper and compose the minds of those who do truly understand and embrace it: such as are Christians indeed (careful followers of Jesus's rules and example) are thereby disposed to maintain peace and amity between themselves, yea to perform all offices of charity and kindness to one another, although their conditions in the world, their complexions, their endowments and abilities be however different; for the Christian doctrine representeth all that embrace it as fellow-servants of the same Lord, as brethren and children of the same Father, as members of the same body, as objects of the same divine regard and love, as partakers of the same privileges, professors of the same truth, consorts of the same hope, coheirs^{Isa. xi. 5.}
^{lxv. 25.}
^{lvi. 12.}

SERM. of the same glory and happiness, as thence united
XVIII. and allied to one another by the strictest bands and
most endearing relations; hence it suppleth the
stoutest heart, and sweeteneth the fiercest tempers;
it inclineth persons of highest state, power, wealth,
knowledge, to condescensive humility and meekness
toward the meanest; this reason presently occurring
to every Christian mind, that no Christian brother is
indeed contemptible, can without folly, may without
sin be contemned: whence although Jesus's doctrine
hath not quite removed wars and contentions out of
the world, yea not out of that part thereof which doth
acknowledge him, (for that were a thing impossible,
without a total alteration of human nature, or root-
ing out of it those appetites of pride, voluptuousness,
self-love, and covetousness, which are the seeds of
strife; the effecting which it cannot be supposed that
the prophets did intend,) yet hath it done considera-
bly toward it; it hath disposed many persons (many
great and considerable in the world) to a very just,
innocent, and peaceable conversation; it hath kin-
dled ardent love and compassion toward all man-
kind in many hearts; it hath produced great fruits
of charity and bounty in persons of all sorts; it hath
had no small influence upon the common state of
things, causing human affairs to be managed with
much equity and gentleness, restraining outrageous
iniquity and oppression.

It was also further particularly foretold, that great
princes and potentates should submit to the Messias,
seriously avowing his authority over them, yielding
veneration to his name, and obedience to his laws;
with their power and wealth promoting and encou-
raging the religion instituted by him, defending and

cherishing his faithful people : *All kings*, said the SERM. Psalmist of him, *shall fall before him ; all nations* XVIII.
shall do him service ; To a servant of rulers, said Ps. lxxii. 11. Isaiah also of him, *kings shall see and arise, princes* Is. xl ix. 7, 23. iii. 15.
also shall do worship : and the same prophet concerning his church ; *Kings*, saith he, *shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers ;* Is. lx. 3, 10,
they shall bow down to thee with their face toward 16.
the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet : The Gen-
tiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the bright-
ness of thy rising ; — The sons of strangers shall
build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister
unto thee ; — Thou shalt suck the milk of the Gen-
tiles, and shalt suck the breasts of kings ; — The Is. lxii. 2.
Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings
thy glory. All this we see plainly to have been accom-
plished, for that soon the highest of earthly powers did submit and stoop thereto ; that many great princes (great and glorious as even the world hath known any ; such as Constantine, Theodosius, Charlemagne, and others of like illustrious renown) have willingly entertained Jesus's doctrine, and gladly undergone his yoke ; that long successions of emperors and kings through the best frequented and most civilized part of the world have seriously professed themselves the subjects and servants of Jesus ; expressing humble adoration of his person, and yielding obseriance to his laws ; maintaining the profes-
sion of his religion by their power, supporting the ministers of it by their bounty, cherishing the prac-
tice thereof by manifold helps and encouragements ;
they have seemed ambitious of titles drawn from

* Οὐ γὰρ ἀρησαίμην ἂν, ἐφ' ὃ μάλιστα χαίρει συθεράπων ἴμέτερος τεφικέας. Const. apud Eus. de Vit. Const. iii.

SERM. performances of this nature, affecting and glorifying
 XVIII. to be styled, *Most Christian Kings, Catholic Kings,
 Defenders of the Faith, and Sons of the Church.*

It was also to be a particular consequence of what the Messias should do, that by virtue of his performances idolatry (that is, the worship of wicked spirits, or of fictitious deities) should in a conspicuous manner be vanquished, driven away, and destroyed ; the worship of the only true God being substituted in its

Isa. ii. 17. room : *The Lord alone*, saith Isaiah concerning
18. his times, *shall be exalted in that day, and the*
Ezek. *idols he shall utterly abolish* : and, *It shall come*
xxvi. 25. *to pass*, saith Zechariah, *in that day, saith the Lord*
Zech. xiii. 2. *of hosts, I will cut off the name of the idols out of*
the land, and they shall be no more remembered ; and also *I will cause the prophets, and the unclean spirits to pass out of the land.* Now this we know was soon effected by the doctrine of our Lord, in a most remarkable manner : idolatry, in all places where it came, did flee and vanish before it ; the *John xii. 31.* Devil's frauds (whereby he so long had abused and
xvi. 11. *scolded mankind)* being detected, and that author-
Eph. ii. 2. *ity which he had usurped over the world, being ut-*
2 Cor. iv. 8. *terly disavowed* ; all the pack of infernal apostate
Col. i. 13. *Matt. xii. 29.* *saints being not only rejected and disclaimed, but*
Acts xxvi. 18. *Luke xi. 21.* *scorned and detested.* Jesus (as the gospel telleth
Col. ii. 15. *us, and as experience confirmeth*) did combat the *John xii. 31.* *strong one*, did baffle and bind him ; he disarmed and rifled him ; he triumphed over him, and exposed him to shame ; he cast him out, and dissolved all his works. At the appearance of Jesus's doctrine, and the sound of his name, his altars were deserted,

'Εγώ ὁ συνθεράπων ὑμέτερος καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἶναι χαίρων. Const. apud Socr. i. 9. in Epist. ad Eccl. Alexandr.

his temples fell down, his oracles were struck dumb, SERM.
his arts were supplanted, all his worship and king- XVIII.
dom were quite subverted. The sottish adoration
of creatures (by the suggestion also of Satan, and
by man's vain fancy advanced to a participation of
divine honour) was also presently banished, and
thrown away ; the only true God (the Maker and
Lord of all things) being thenceforth acknowledged
and adored as the only fountain of good, and the
sole object of worship.

Again, whereas in regard to all these performances the state of things constituted by the Messias καὶ τὸν θεόν
θεωρῶντας. is described so different from the former state of Heb. ix. 10.
mankind, that it is called the creation of a new world : *For behold*, saith God in Isaiah concerning Isa. lxv. 17.
the Messias's times, *I create new heavens and a* lxvi. 22. *xliii. 18.*
new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind, (whence the Jews commonly before our Lord's time were used to call the Messias's time, *the world to come, the future age;*) it is οἰκουμένην
μεταλλουσα. plain that Jesus may well be esteemed to have ac- Heb. ii. 5.
complished the intent of those expressions ; he (as Ο μίλλων
αἰών. the ἐπανορθωτὴς τοῦ κόσμου, the rectifier and rearer of Heb. vi. 5. Orig. in
the world, as Origen calleth him) having wrought Cels. 3. so huge alterations in the minds, and hearts, and lives of men, in their principles and opinions, in their dispositions and in their practices ; having so changed the face of affairs, and reformed the course of things in the world ; bringing men out of lamentable darkness and error into clear light and knowledge, rescuing them from superstition, impiety, and wickedness, and engaging them into ways of true religion, holiness, and righteousness ; so many persons being ap-

SERM. parently renewed in the spirit of their minds; being
 XVIII. made new creatures, created according to God in
 Eph. iv. 23, righteousness and true holiness; so that, as the
 24. 2 Cor. xv. apostle speaks, old things are passed away, behold
 17. all things are become new; so that what the contumacious Jews in anger and ill-will did call Jesus's
 Acts xvii. 6. instruments, had a true sense; they were οἱ τὴν οἰκον-
 μέρην ἀγαστατώσαντες, they who had turned the world
 upside down; they did so indeed, but so as to settle
 it in a better posture.

Concerning which good effects of Christian religion the ancient Christians had good reason to glory,
 οἱ δὲ πατέρες τῶν Χριστιανῶν.
 μᾶς οὐχ ἐπ-
 ού, &c.
 Orig. in
 Cels. lib. i.
 p. 50. Vid.
 Chrys. in
 1 Cor. i.
 and to say with Origen; *The adversaries of Christianity do not discern, how many men's diseases of soul, and how many floods of vices, have been restrained; and how many men's savage manners have been tamed by reason of the Christian doctrine; wherefore being satisfied with the public beneficialness thereof, which by a new method doth free men from many mischiefs, they ought willingly to render thanks thereto, and to yield testimony, if not to the truth of it, yet to its profitableness to mankind.*

There remain behind several important considerations appertaining to this purpose, concerning the performances of the Messias, and events about him; his being to suffer grievous things from men, and for men; his performing miraculous works; the yielding various attestations from heaven to his person and doctrine; from the congruity of which particulars to what Jesus did endure and act; and to what God hath done in regard to him, the truth of our conclusion, that *Jesus is the very Christ,*

will be manifest : but time now forbiddeth the pro- SERM.
secution of those matters ; and I must therefore re- XVIII.
serve it to other occasion.

Now, *To him that is able to keep us from * falling* * offending.
and to present us blameless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, Jude 24,
25.
To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now, and for ever.

Unto the King + eternal, immortal, invisible, the + of ages.
1 Tim. i.
only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

Salvation be unto our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

Amen ; Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father ; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N XIX.

THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

ACTS ix. 22.

— *Proving that Jesus is the Christ.*

SERM. **W**HAT is the true notion of the name or title *Christ*, we (in discoursing formerly upon this text) did explain. That one person, to whom that notion signally doth agree, was by God's especial determination to come into the world, we did also in the next place, from prophetical instruction (backed with the common tradition and current opinion of God's people) declare. We further in the sequel did profound to shew, that Jesus (whom we acknowledge) was that very person; the Messias predicted by the prophets, and expected by the Jews. This we have already (in the foregoing Discourses, proved from several circumstances of his birth and coming among men; from his personal qualifications, and from divers illustrious performances managed by him, in correspondency to what the prophets foretold concerning the Messias. The same we now proceed to confirm from other very considerable particulars

foretold by them, and suiting to him ; and first from SER M.
those things which the Messias was to undergo and

^{XIX.}
suffer.

Acts iii. 18.
Luke xviii.

That the Messias was to come in a humble and ^{31.} homely manner, (without appearances of worldly splendour or grandeur;) that he was to converse among men in a state of external poverty and meanness ; that he was to be disregarded and despised by men ; that he was to cause offences, and to find oppositions in his proceedings ; that he was to be repulsed and rejected, to be scorned and hated, to be disgracefully and hardly treated, to be grievously persecuted and afflicted ; yea, that at last he was to be prosecuted, condemned, and executed as a malefactor, is a truth which the Jews (although they firmly believed and earnestly expected the coming of a Messias) did not, and indeed were hardly capable to entertain. It was a point repugnant to the whole frame of their conceits, yea inconsistent with the nature and drift of their religion, as they understood it. For their religion in its surface (deeper than which their gross fancy could not penetrate) did represent earthly wealth, dignity, and prosperity as things highly valuable ; did propound them as very proper (if not as the sole) rewards of piety and obedience ; did imply consequently the possession of them to be certain arguments of the divine good-will and regard ; they could not therefore but esteem poverty, affliction, and disgrace, as curses from heaven, and plain indications of God's disfavour toward those on whom they fell : they particularly did conceive, that to be rich was a necessary qualification to a prophet, (no less necessary, than to be of a good complexion, of a good capacity, of a good life;) *Spi-*

SERM. *ritus Dei non requiescit super pauperem; The Spirit of God rests not upon a poor man,* (that is, no special communications of grace, wisdom, goodness, are ever by God afforded to persons of a low or afflicted condition,) was a rule they had framed, and which passed among them. That he therefore, who was designed to be so notable a Prophet; who was to have the honour of being so special an instrument of promoting God's service and glory; who therefore must be so highly favoured by God, should appear despicable, and undergo great afflictions, was a notion that could not but seem very absurd, could not otherwise than be very abominable to them. They had also (in congruity to those prejudices, abetted by that extreme self-love and self-flattery, which were peculiar to that nation) raised in themselves a strong opinion, that the Messias was to come in a great visible state and power; to do acts of great prowess and renown, to bring the nations of the world into subjection under him, and so to reign among them in glorious majesty and prosperity. When Jesus therefore (however otherwise answerable in his circumstances, qualifications, and performances to the prophetical characters of the Messias) did appear,

^{Matt. xiv.} ^{20.} such as he did, with pretences (or intimations rather) that he was the Messias, their stomach rose at it, they were hugely offended at him, they deemed him not only a madman (one possessed or distracted) and

^{Matt. xiii.} ^{57. xxvi.} ^{65.} an impostor, but a blasphemer; for to be no less than blasphemy they took it, for so pitiful a wretch to arrogate unto himself so high a dignity, so near a relation to God, as the being the Messias did import. We see even the disciples of our Lord so deeply tainted with this national prejudice, that (even after

they had acknowledged him to be *the Christ*) they SERM. could not with patience hear him foretelling what XIX. should befall him, (St. Peter, upon that occasion, Matt. xvi. even just after he had confessed him to be *the Christ*, John xvi. 22. xvii. 2. did, as the text says, take him, and began to rebuke ^{12.} him, saying, *Be it far from thee, Lord.*) Yea, pre- Matt. xx. sently after that he most plainly had described his ^{21, 25.} sufferings to them, they could not forbear dreaming of kingdoms, and being grandees in them ; yea, even after our Lord's passion and resurrection, this fancy still possessed them ; for even then they demand of him, whether he would *at that time restore the kingdom unto Israel*, (meaning such an external Acts i. 6. visible kingdom.)

This hence of all *things notifying* the Messias seems to be the only particular which in general the Jews did not, or would not, see and acknowledge : and this caused them to oversee all *the rest*, how clearly soever shining in and about the person of Jesus. This cloud hindered them from discerning Nisi enim ignoratus nihil pati posset. Tert. in. Marc. iii. 6. the excellency of his doctrine, from regarding the sanctity of his life, from being affected with the wonderfulness of his works ; from minding or credit- ing all the testimonies ministered from heaven unto him. This, as St. Paul tells us, was the great scandal ^{1 Cor. i. 23.} which obstructed their embracing the gospel. We cannot therefore here, as in other particulars, allege the general consent of God's people, in expounding the prophets according to our sense ; this being one Vid. Tert. ibid. Isa. vi. 9. Ezek. xiii. 2. Matt. xiii. 13. Acts xxviii. 26. of those points, in respect to which the prophets did foresee and foretell their perverse stupidity and incredulity ; that they should *look and not see, hear and not understand* ; yielding herein special occasion to that complaint, *Who hath believed our report ?* Isa. liii. 1.

SERM. Yet notwithstanding their (affected) blindness,
 XIX. there is no particular concerning the Messias, in the
 ancient scripture, either more frequently (in way of
 mystical insinuation, or adumbration) glanced at, or
 more clearly (in direct and plain language) express-
 ed, or which also by reasonable deductions thence
 may be inferred more strongly than this. St. Peter
 Acts iii. 18. affirms, that *God had foreshewed it by the mouth*
 Luke xxiv. 44. *of all his prophets* (not only of some, but *of all his*
prophets:) the same our Lord himself did signify
 before his departure to his disciples out of Moses,
 the Prophets, and Psalms, shewing them this par-
 ticular, and opening their minds to understand the
 scriptures concerning it; concluding his discourse
 to them thus, "Οτι οὗτος γέγραπται, καὶ οὗτος ἔδει ταῦτα
 τὸν Χριστὸν, *Thus it was written, and thus ought*
Christ (according to the prophetical presignifica-
 tions and predictions) *to suffer.*

For the explaining and confirming of which truth,
 let us presume here to make a preparatory discourse
 or digression (not unseasonable perhaps, or improper
 to our purpose) concerning the nature of divine pre-
 significations, which may serve to declare the per-
 tinency of many citations produced out of the an-
 cient scripture in the New Testament, (the which,
 together with others connected to them, or bearing
 analogy to them, we also, being assured of their de-
 sign by the authority of our Lord and his apostles,
 may safely presume after them to apply to the same
 purposes.) We may then consider, that the allwise

- Eph. i. 11.
- 2 Tim. i. 9.
- Tit. i. 2.
- 1 Cor. ii. 7.
- Eph. i. 3.
- iii. 9.
- Rom. xvi. 25.
- Col. i. 26.

God, (who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and to whom all things are present) having before eternal times, as St. Paul speaketh, determined in due time to send the Messias for ac-

complishing the greatest design that ever was to be SERM.
managed in this world, (which should bring the XIX.
highest glory to himself, and procure the greatest
benefit to the principal of his creatures here,) did
by his incomprehensible providence so order things,
that all the special dispensations preceding it should
have a fit tendency and advantageous reference
thereto; so that when it came upon the stage, it
might appear, that the main of the plot consisted
therein, and that whatever before was acted, had a
principal respect thereto. As therefore from the
beginning of things God did in a gradual method
make real preparations toward it, by steps impart-
ing discoveries of his mind about it, or in order to
it, (somewhat to Adam himself, more to Abraham
and the patriarchs, somewhat further to Moses, much
more yet to divers of the prophets among his chosen
people, who not only foretold largely concerning it,
but delivered several instructions conformable to it,
and nearly conducing to the promoting thereof;) so he did also take especial care by many apposite
resemblances, handsomely inserted into all his dis-
pensations, to set it out, and to insinuate his mean-
ing about it; that so at length it might shew itself
with more solemnity, and less surprise. The most
eminent persons therefore, whom he raised up and
employed in his affairs tending to that end, as they
did resemble the Messias in being instruments of his
particular grace and providence, (being indeed infe-
rior Christs and mediators, and partial saviours of
his people, as they are sometimes called,) so they
were ordered in several circumstances of their per-
sons, in divers actions they did, in the principal
accidents befalling them, to represent him; as also

*Natura simili-
citate Eu-
sebius calls
them, Ecol.
Hist. i. 3.*

*Heb. viii. 6.
Gal. iii. 19.
Neh. ix. 27.
Acts vii. 35.*

*Eisorum
Xperiorum
(Christs in
effigie) Eu-
sebius calls
them, Ecol.
Hist. i. 4.*

SERM. the rites and services instituted by them were adapt-
XX. ed to the same purpose ; they and all things about
 *Heb. viii. them being * fitted by God's especial wise care, so
Exod. xxv. as to be congruous emblems and shadows presigni-
40. fying the Christ, and what appertained to him ; his
Rom. v. 14. circumstances and accidents, his performances, his institutions. Thus was Adam, as St. Paul calls him, a type of Christ ; Abel, Melchizedek, Isaac, Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, Zorobabel, are also intimated to have been such ; the most signal things done by them, or befalling them, having been suited to answer somewhat that was remarkable concerning him ; we may say of them all, as the apostle to

Heb. viii. 5. the Hebrews says of the Jewish priests; *They served to the subindication and shadowing of heavenly things* (*οἵτινες ἵκεδείγματι καὶ σκῆ λατρεύονται τῶν ἐπο-ρωίων.*) In David particularly this relation is so plain, that because thereof often (as we before noted) in the prophets, (Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea,) the Messias is called by his name. It indeed well suited the dignity of this great Person, and the importance of his business, that he should have such notable

Heb. viii. 5. ushers, heralds, and harbingers *going before his*
x. i. ix. 23. *face;* furnished with conspicuous badges and ensigns
Gal. iv. 24.
Col. ii. 17. denoting their relation to him ; it was proper that God should appear always to have had an express care and especial regard toward him. It consequently serves for our edification ; for that we duly comparing things, and discerning this admirable correspondence, may be somewhat instructed thereby, and somewhat confirmed in our faith ; may be excited to the admiration of God's wisdom and goodness, (so provident for our good;) may also be induced thereby the more highly to adore the Messias,

and to esteem his design^c. *All these things* (saith St. Paul, having compared divers things concerning Moses to things concerning Christ) *happened as types, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come.* It is also (for illustration, and also for proof of these things) to be observed, that because those eminent servants of God were representatives of Christ, many things are spoken of them as such; many things are ascribed to them, which only or chiefly were intended of him; their names are used as veils to cover divers things concerning him, which it seemed not to divine wisdom convenient or seasonable in a more open and clear manner to disclose promiscuously to all men, (why God should choose to express things of this nature in such a manner, we need not to determine; it may be perhaps for reasons best known to himself, and above our ken or cognizance; yet probable reasons may be assigned for it, yea some more than probable being hinted in scripture; it may be for a decent and harmonious distinction of times, of dispensations, of persons; it may be from the depth of things to conciliate a reverence to them, and to raise the price of knowing them, by the difficulty of doing so; it may be to exercise and improve men's understanding, to inflame their desire, to excite their industry, to provoke their devotion, to render them humble; it may be to reward an honest and diligent study of God's word; it may be for occasion of freely conveying special gifts of interpretation; it may be to conceal some things from

*Rev. ii. 7,
&c. xiii. 18.
xvii. 9.*

*Matt. xiii.
9. xxiv. 15.*

*Dan. ix. 1.
John v. 39.
Luke xxiv.*

*45.
1 Cor. xii.
10. xiv. 26.
Eph.i. 9,10.*

^c "Οτι δὴ καὶ αὐτὸς τῆς τοῦ μόνου καὶ ἀληθοῦς Χριστοῦ τοῦ κατὰ πάντων βασιλεύοντος θείου λόγου βασιλικῆς καὶ ἀρχικῆς ἐξουσίας τοὺς τίκους διέκυνε ἔφερον. (Euseb. 16, &c.)

S E R M. some persons unfit or unworthy to know them, especially from persons haughty and self-conceited ; it may be to use the ignorance of some as a means to produce some great event, (*If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;*) it cannot be supposed necessary that all things should be plainly discovered to all persons ; it is evident that some things are purposely couched in parabolical and mysterious expression ; it is particularly the manner of prophetical instruction frequently to involve things, the full and clear knowledge of which is not congruous to every season and every capacity : but to return from out of this parenthesis to our case.) That under the names of persons representing Christ (or of things we may add adumbrating his things) many things are intimated concerning him and his dispensations, may be collected and confirmed from hence, that many things are attributed to persons (and to things also) which do not agree to them ; many things were promised, which appear never accomplished, except after a very improper and hyperbolical manner of expression, or according to an enormous wideness of interpretation ; such as doth not well suit to the nature of true histories and serious promises. Thus, for instance, are many things foretold concerning the large extent and prosperous estate of the Jewish church, which history and experience testify never (according to strictness of literal acceptance, yea not in any tolerable degree near the height of what the words import) to have happened. Thus also, as the apostle to the Hebrews well argueth, effects are attributed to the Jewish rites and sacrifices, which according to the nature of the thing cannot belong to them, otherwise than

¹ Isa. iii. 17. ² Cor. ii. 8.

¹ Isa. xxv. 8.

¹ Heb. x. 4.

as shadows and substitutes of higher things. Thus SERM. also what is with solemn oath promised to Solomon _____ (concerning the vast extent and endless duration of his empire in righteousness, peace, and prosperity; ^{Psal. xlv. lxxii.} ^{lxxxiii. &c.} together with his mighty acts and victorious achievements) doth not appear directly in any competent measure to have been performed. Thus also David, as St. Peter observes and argues in the second of the Acts, speaketh many things of himself, which cannot ^{Acts ii. 29.} be conceived properly and literally agreeable to him. Such things therefore are reasonably supposed to be intimations of somewhat appertaining to the future more perfect state of things under the Messias; to concern him (who was to be the end of the Law) ^{Rom. x. 4.} ^{2 Cor. iii. 13.} and his dispensation, which was to contain the ac-^{Luke xxii.} complishment of all things predicted and presignified.^{37.} This is that which St. Austin signifies when he says, ^d *Which Christ* (saith he, *and what concerns him*)—*all the promises of that nation, all their prophecies, priesthoods, sacrifices, their temple, and altogether all their sacraments did resound, or express.*

Neither are these things only said according to suppositions assumed in the New Testament, but they agree (as to their general importance) to the sense of the ancient Jews, who did conceive such mysterious references often to lie couched under the letter of scripture. They supposed a *midrash* or mystical sense of scripture, which they very studiously (even to excess commonly) did search after. It was, as Lud. Capellus affirms, a confident and

<sup>In Exerc.
ad Zohar.</sup>

^d *Quem Christum—omnia gentis illius promissa, omnes prophetiae, sacerdotia, sacrificia, templum, et cuncta omnino sacramenta sonuerunt.* *Aug. ad Volus. Ep. iii.*

SERM. constant opinion of their doctors, that all things in
 XIX. Moses's law were typical, and capable of mystical
 exposition. And Philo's writings (composed in or
 immediately after our Saviour's times) are a plain
 confirmation of what he saith ; we have also several
 Matt. xxi.
 9, 42. xxii.
 32, 42. instances and intimations thereof in the New Testa-
 ment. Neither probably would the apostles in
 their discourses and disputations with the Jews have
 used this way of interpreting and citing passages of
 scripture, if they in general had not admitted and
 approved it.

Now these things being (cursorily) premised, we
 return into our way, and say, that the Messias's
 being to suffer was in divers passages of the an-
 cient scripture prefigured. Supposing the thing itself
 should be, there is a peculiar reason why it should
 be so represented, thus expressed by Tertullian :
*The sacrament indeed, saith he, of Christ's pas-
 sion ought to have been figured in the (ancient)
 predication; forasmuch as that the more incre-
 dible it was, if it should have been preached na-
 kedly, the more offensive it would have been; and
 the more magnificent it was, the more it was to be
 shaded, that the difficulty of understanding it might
 cause the seeking of God's grace.* Supposing also
 it should be, the passages about Abel, Isaac, Josias,
 Jeremiah, (and the like,) may congruously be ap-
 plied thereto ; the elevation of the brasen serpent,
 and the killing of the paschal lamb, may appositely

^c Utique sacramentum passionis ipsius figurari in prædicationi-
 bus oportuerat ; quantoque incredibile, tanto magis scandalum
 futurum ; quantoque magnificent, tanto magis adumbrandum, ut
 difficultas intellectus gratiam Dei quæreret. *Tertull. in Judæos,*
 cap. 10.

represent it ; the Jewish priests, with all their sacrifices, may also with reason be brought in and accommodated thereto : these things are not indeed by themselves alone apt peremptorily to evince that it should be ; yet do they handsomely suit it, and adorn the supposition thereof, according to the notion we touched about the typical relation between the matters of the old world before the Messias, and those of the new one after him. But with a clearer evidence and stronger force we may affirm, that the Messias's sufferings were implied in the afflictions of his representative king David, such as he in several Psalms (the 35th, 69th, 109th, 118th, and especially in the 22d Psalm) describeth them : wherein divers passages (expressing the extreme sadness and forlornness of his condition) occur, which by the history of his life do not so well, according to the literal signification of words, appear congruous to his person ; which therefore there is a necessity, or (at least) much reason, that they should be applied to the Messias, whom David did represent.

Which being admitted, comparing then the passages we have there to what befell Jesus, we shall find an admirable harmony, there being scarce any part of his affliction in his life, or any circumstance thereof at his death, which is not in emphatical and express terms there set out. There we have expressed his low and despicable estate; (*I am a worm*, Ps. xxii. 6. *and no man; the reproach of men, and despised of the people.*)—The causeless hatred and enmity of the populace and of the great ones toward him ; (*They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; they that would destroy me*, Ps. lxix. 4. cix. 3. *being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: they*

SER.M. compassed me about with words of hatred, and
 XIX. fought against me without a cause.—) The ingrateful requital made to him for all the good done by him, and intended by him; (*They rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love*)—Their rejecting him; (*The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone in the corner*)—Their insidious and calumnious proceedings against him;
 Ps. xxxv. 7, (Without cause have they hid for me their net in
 11. cix. 2. a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul: and, False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not: and, The mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me; they have spoken against me with a lying tongue)—Their bitter insulting over him in his affliction; (*But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together; yea the abjects gathered themselves together against me: They persecute him whom thou hast smitten, and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded: καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἄλγος τῶν τραυμάτων μου προσέθηκαν, and to the smart of my wounds they added*, say the LXX.)—Their scornful reviling, flouting,
 Ps. xxii. 7, and mocking him; (*All they that see me laugh at me to scorn; they shoot the lip; they shake the head, saying, He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighteth in him. I became a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me, they shaked their heads. They opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, Aha! our eye hath seen it.* Ἐπέίρασαν με, ἔξεμυκτήρισάν με μυκτηρισμὸν, ἔβρυξαν ἐπ' ἐμὲ τοὺς οὖντας αὐτῶν *They tempted me, they extremely mocked me, they gnashed their teeth upon me*)—The cruel manner

of their dealing with him; (*Dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me*)—Their dealing with him, when in his distress he called for some refreshment; (*They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink*)—
Their disposal of his garments upon his suffering; (*They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture*)—His being deserted of his friends, and destitute of all consolation; (*I am become a stranger to my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children: I am full of heaviness; and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none*)—The sense of God's withholding his favour and help; (*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me?*)—His charitable disposition and behaviour toward his persecutors; (*But as for me, when they were sick, (or as the LXX. when they did trouble me, Ἐν τῷ αὐτοὺς παρενοχλεῖν μοι,) my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled myself with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom: I behaved myself as though it had been my friend or brother; I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.*) Which passages and the like, how patly and punctually they do square to respective passages in the gospels, I need not to shew; we do all, I suppose, well enough remember that both most doleful and comfortable history, to be able ourselves to make the application.

But there are not only such oblique intimations, shrouded under the coverture of other persons and names, but direct and immediate predictions con-

SER M. cerning the Messias's being to suffer most clearly expressed. That whole famous chapter in Isaiah (the 53d chapter) doth most evidently and fully declare it, wherein the kind, manner, causes, ends, and consequences of his sufferings, together with his behaviour under them, are graphically represented. His

Isa. liii. 2. appearing meanness; (*He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him*)—The disgrace, contempt, ver. 3. repulses, and rejection he underwent; (*He is despised and rejected of men—we hid our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not*)—

ver. 3, 4. His afflicted state; (*He is a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted*)—The bitter and painful ver. 5, 8. manner of his affliction; (*He was stricken; bore stripes, was wounded, was bruised*)—His being accused, adjudged, and condemned as a malefactor;

ver. 8, 12. (*He was taken from prison and from judgment—he was numbered among the transgressors*)—His ver. 12, 8, 7. consequent death; (*He poured out his soul unto death; He was cut out of the land of the living*)—The design and end of his sufferings; they were appointed and inflicted by divine Providence for our sake, and in our stead; for the expiation of our sins, ver. 10, 5. and our salvation; (*It pleased the Lord to bruise him: he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin:—He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed:—Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:—For the transgression of my people he was smitten:—The Lord hath laid on him the inqui-*

4, 8, 6, 12.

ties of us all)—His sustaining all this with a willing patience and meekness ; (He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth : ver. 7. he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth)—His charitable praying for his persecutors ; so that may be understood, (He made intercession for the transgressors)—The consequence and success of his sufferings ; (He shall see his seed, ver. 10, 11, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied : by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many ; and, I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong.) Which passages as they most exactly suit to Jesus, and might in a manner constitute an historical narration of what he did endure, together with the opinions taught in the gospel concerning the intent and effect of his sufferings ; so that they did (according to the intention of the divine Spirit) relate to the Messias, may from several considerations be apparent ; the context and coherence of all this passage with the precedent and subsequent passages, which plainly respect the Messias, and his times : How Isa. lii. 7. beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him ^{13.} that bringeth good tidings ! and, Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, &c. are passages immediately going before, of which this 53d chapter is but a continuation ; and immediately after it followeth, Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear, &c. being a very elegant and perspicuous description of the church augmented by accession of the Gentiles, which was to be brought to pass by the Messias.

SERM. The general scope of this whole prophecy argues the same ; and the incongruity of this particular prediction to any other person imaginable beside the Messias doth further evince it ; so high are the things which are attributed to the suffering Person ; as that he should *bear the sins* of all God's people, and heal them ; that he should *by his knowledge justify many* ; that *the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand* ; that God would *divide him a portion with the great*, and that he should *divide the spoil with the strong* ; the magnificency and importance of which things do well agree to the Messias, but not to any other person : whence if the ancient Jews had reason to believe a Messias, they had as much reason to apply this place to him as any other, and to acknowledge he was to be a great sufferer ; and indeed divers of the ancient Targumists and most learned Rabbins did expound this place of the one Messias that was to come, as the Pugio Fidei and other learned writers do by several testimonies shew. This place also discovers the vanity of that figment devised by some later Jews, who, to evade and oppose Jesus, affirmed there was to be a double Messias, (one who should be much afflicted, the other who should greatly prosper,) since we may observe that here both great afflictions and glorious performances are ascribed to the same person.

The same things are also by parts clearly predicted in other places of this prophet, and in other scriptures : by Isaiah again in the chapter immediately foregoing ; *Behold, saith he, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high,* (there is God's servant (he that is in way of excellency such, that is, in this

^{13.}
^{14.}

prophet's style, the *Messias*) in his real glorious capacity; it follows, concerning his external appearance,) *his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:* and again, in the 49th chapter, *Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One;* ^{Isa. xl ix. 7.} *To him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship.* What can be more express and clear, than that the *Messias*, who should subject the world, with its sovereign powers, to the acknowledgment and adoration of himself, was to be despised by men, to be detested by the Jews, and to appear in a servile and base condition? The same prophet again brings him in speaking thus: *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.* His offending the Jews and aggravating their sins is also expressed by this same prophet; *And, saith he, he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.* The opposition also he should receive is signified in the 2d Psalm; *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed.* The prophet Zechariah doth also in several places very roundly express his sufferings: his low condition in those words; *Behold, thy King cometh unto thee lowly, (pauper,) and riding upon an ass:* his manner of death in those; *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow,* ^{Zech. ix. 9.} *saith the Lord of hosts; smite the shepherd, and* ^{Zech. xiii. 7.}

SERM. *the sheep shall be scattered; and again; I will*
 XIX. *pour upon the house of David, and upon the in-*
habitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of
supplications; and they shall look upon me, whom
they have pierced, and they shall mourn, &c. The
 prophet Daniel also in that place, from which pro-
 bably the name Messias was taken, and which most
 Dan. ix. 26. expressly mentions him, saith, that *after threescore*
and two weeks the Messias shall be cut off, but
not for himself. Now from these passages of scrip-

Luke xxiv. 26. *ture we may well say with our Lord; "Οτι ὅτῳ γέ-*
γραπται, καὶ οὗτῳ ἐδει παθεῖν τὸν Χριστόν. That thus it
was written, and thus, according to the prophet's
*foretelling, it was to happen, that the *Messias**
should suffer; suffer in a life of penury and con-
tempt, in a death of shame and sorrow.

That it was to be thus might also be inferred by reasons grounded on the qualities of the Messias's person, and the nature of his performances, such as they are described in the scripture. He was to be really and to appear plainly a person of most admirable virtue and good worth; but never was there or can be any such (as even pagan philosophers, Plato, Seneca, and others, have observed) without undergoing the trial of great affliction. He was to be an universal pattern to men of all sorts, (especially to the greatest part, that is, to the poor,) of all righteousness; to exemplify particularly the most difficult pieces of duty, (humility, patience, meekness, charity, self-denial, entire resignation to God's will;) this he should not have opportunity or advantage of doing, if his condition had been high, wealthy, splendid, and prosperous. He was to exercise pity and sympathy towards all mankind; the

which to do it was requisite he should feel the inconveniences and miseries incident to mankind. He was to advance the repute of spiritual and eternal goods; and to depress the value of those corporeal and temporal things, which men vainly admire; the most ready and compendious way of doing this was by an exemplary neglecting and refusing worldly enjoyments, (the honours, profits, and pleasures here.) He was by gentle and peaceable means to erect a spiritual kingdom, to subdue the hearts and consciences of men to the love and obedience of God, to raise in men the hopes of future rewards and blessings in heaven; to the accomplishment of which purposes temporal glory had been rather prejudicial than conducible. He was to manage his great designs by means supernatural and divine, the which would be more conspicuous by the visible meanness and impotency of his state. He was to merit most highly from God for himself and for men; this he could not do so well, as in enduring for God's sake and ours the hardest things. He was to save men, and consequently to appease God's wrath and satisfy his justice, by the expiation of our sins; this required that he should suffer what we had deserved. But reasons of this kind I partly before touched, and shall hereafter have occasion to prosecute more fully in treating upon the article of our Saviour's passion.

Now that Jesus (our Lord) did most thoroughly correspond to whatever is in this kind declared concerning the Messias, we need not by relating minutely the known history of his life and death make out further; since the whole matter is palpably notorious, and no adversary will deny it. I conclude

SERM.
XIX.

SERM. this point with St. Peter's words, (for the illustrat-

XIX. and proof of which this Discourse hath been mad-

Acts iii. 18. *But those things which God before had shewed
the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ sho-
suffer, he hath so fulfilled.*

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N XX.

THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

JOHN v. 37.

And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me.

JESUS, our Lord, here and in the context doth SERM.
affirm, that Almighty God, his Father, had granted XX.
unto him several kinds of extraordinary attestation,
sufficient to convince all well-disposed persons, unto
whom they shall be discovered, that he truly was
that Messias, whom God before all beginning of time
had designed, and frequently by his prophets had
promised to send for the reformation of the world
and salvation of mankind : to represent those several
ways of divine attestation with some reflections on
them, serving both to the confirmation of our faith,
and improving our affection and our reverence there-
to, is my chief design at this time.

But first, in preparation to what we shall say
concerning those particulars, and for declaration of
the divine wisdom in this manner of proceeding, I
shall assign some reasons, why it was requisite that
such attestations should be afforded to our Lord.

1. The nature of the Messias's office required such
attestations ; for since he was designed to the most

SERM. eminent employment that ever was or could be committed to any person ; since he was to reveal things

XX. no less great and important, than new and strange ; since he was to assume a most high authority unto himself ; since he was to speak and act all in the

Deut. xviii. name of God ; since also all men under great penalties were obliged to yield credit and obedience to

^{19.} Acts iii. 23. him, there was great reason that God should appear to authorize him ; that he should be able to produce

God's hand and seal to his commission ; for that otherwise he might have been suspected of imposture ; his doctrine might have been rejected, his authority disclaimed, and his design frustrated, without great blame, or however without men's being convincible of blame : for well might the people suspect that person, who, professing to come in such a capacity an extraordinary agent from heaven, brought no credentials thence, (no evidence of God's especial favour and assistance;) well might they reject that new doctrine, which God vouchsafed not by any signal testimony to countenance ; well might they disclaim that authority, which offering to introduce so great innovations (to repeal old laws, to cancel settled obligations, to abolish ancient customs ; to enact new laws and rules, exacting obedience to them from all men) should not be able to exhibit

John vi. 27. its warrant, and shew its derivation from heaven : well might such peremptory assertions and so confident pretences, without confirmations answerable in weight, beget even in wise men distrust and aversion. The reasonableness and excellency of his doctrine, the innocence and sanctity of his life, the wisdom and persuasiveness of his discourse would not, if nothing more divine should attend them, be tho-

roughly able to procure faith and submission ; they SERM. would at best have made his precepts to pass for the XX. devices of a wise man, or the dictates of a good philosopher. They were therefore no unreasonable desires or demands (if they had proceeded from a good meaning, and had been joined with a docile and tractable disposition) which the Jews did make to our Lord ; *Master, we would see a sign from thee* ; John ii. 18. *what sign therefore dost thou do, that we may see,* vi. 30. *and believe thee ? what dost thou work ? what sign* Matt. xii. *dost thou shew to us, that thou doest these things ?* ^{28. xvi. 1.} _{Mark viii. 12.} that is, how dost thou prove thy doctrine credible, or thy authority valid, by God's testimony and warrant ? This challenge our Lord himself acknowledged somewhat reasonable ; for he not only asserts the *truth of his doctrine and validity of his commission* John viii. ^{16, 29. x.} _{25, v. 32,} by divine attestation, (in words and works,) nor only ^{36.} exhorts them to credit him upon that account, but he also plainly signifies that his bare affirmation did not require credit, and that if he could produce no better proof, they were excusable for disbelieving him : *If, saith he, I witness of myself, my witness* John v. 31. *is not true ;* not true, that is, not credible ; or not so true, as to oblige to belief : and, *If I do not the* John x. 37. *works of my Father,* (that is, works only imputable to God's extraordinary power,) *believe me not ;* that is, I require no belief from you : yea, he further adds, *If I had not done the works among them,* John xv. *which no man else had done, they* ^{24.} (the incredulous people then) *had not had any sin ;* that is, had not been culpable for unbelief. It was then from the nature of the Messias's office and undertaking very necessary, that he should have attestations of this kind ; and our Lord himself, we see, declines

S E R M. not, but aggravateth his pretences with this necessity.
 XX.

2. The effects which the Messias was to produce did require extraordinary attestations and assistances from God. He was to achieve exploits of the greatest difficulty conceivable; far surpassing all that ever was by any person undertaken in the world before: he was to vanquish all the powers, and to confound all the policies of hell; he was to subdue and subjugate all the world; to make the greatest princes to stoop, and to submit their sceptres to his will; to bring down the most haughty conceits, and to break down the most stubborn spirits, and to tame the wildest passions of men; he was to expel from their minds most deeply rooted prejudices, to banish from their practice most inveterate customs, to cross their most violent humours, to thwart their interests, to bear down their ambitions, to restrain their covetous desires and their voluptuous appetites; he was to persuade a doctrine, and to impose a law, very opposite to the natural inclinations, to the current notions, to the worldly advantages, the liberties, emoluments, and enjoyments of all, or of most, or of many people; he was, in short, so to reform the world, as in a manner quite to alter the whole frame of it, and all the course of affairs therein; things which surely it were a madness to enterprise, and an impossibility to accomplish, without remarkable testimonies of the divine presence, especial aids of the divine power, and large influences of the divine Spirit communicated to him; without, as St. Peter phraseth it, *God were with him*; these things were not effectible by means natural and ordinary, by human wit or eloquence, by good behaviour or example, by the bare

Acts x. 38. John iii. 2.

reason or plausibility of doctrine, by the wise conduct or industrious management of the design ; no, such means have by many experiments appeared insufficient to bring about much lesser matters ; nothing under the wisdom of God directing, the power of God assisting, the authority of God establishing and gracing his endeavours in an eminent and evident manner, could enable the Messias to bring these mighty things to pass.

3. We may further consider, that *the Christ* was designed to present himself first to the Jews, (in the first place imparting the declarations of God's will and gracious intentions to them, his ancient friends and favourites;) that is, to a people wholly addicted to this sort of proof, and uncapable of conviction by any other : they did not, as did *the Greeks*, seek ^{Cor. i. 22.} *wisdom*, but *required a sign*, as St. Paul observed of them ; they were not so apt to inquire after the intrinsic reasons of things, as to expect testimonies from heaven ; nothing else was able to persuade them ; so our Lord expressly saith ; *Jesus said* ^{John iv. 48.} *unto them, If you do not see signs and prodigies, you will nowise believe* : in consequence of which disposition in them, we see by passages in the New Testament, that they expected and believed the Messias should come with such attestations and performances ; so their importunate demanding of signs upon all occasions from our Lord doth signify, and so those words in St. John do imply ; *And many of* ^{John vii. 31.} *the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these, which this man doeth?* where we may observe both their expectation of miraculous works from the Messias, and the efficacy which such works had upon them.

SERM. The condition also of the Gentiles, unto whom his design in the next place did extend, seemed to require the same proceedings : for all other methods of instruction and persuasion had before often been applied to them by philosophers and by politicians, for instilling their notions and recommending their laws ; they had been so inured to subtle argumentations and plausible discourses, that the bare use of them was not likely to have any extraordinary effect upon them : if the Messias therefore should bring no other confirmation with him unto them, he would seem to deserve no higher regard or credit, than other doctors or lawgivers, which had appeared among them ; and as easily would he be declined, and put off by them : whence reasonably it may be supposed, that for accommodation to the genius and the capacities of those upon whose hearts he was to make impression, the Messias should come furnished with such special testimonials and powers from God. Especially considering that,

4. It was agreeable to God's usual method of proceeding in cases resembling this, although much unequal thereto in weight and consequence. There was never any more than ordinary discovery made to men by God, never any very considerable business managed by divine Providence, never hardly any eminent person appeared with a pretence of coming from God for the prosecution of such purposes, without God's visible interposal and abetment. This hath always been the authentic seal, ^{John vi. 27.} whereby he hath wonted to authorize the messengers sent from himself for transacting affairs of an unusual and very weighty nature ; whereby his true ambassadors have been distinguishable from ordi-

Orig. cont.
Cels. viii.
(p. 408.)

nary persons, or from deceitful pretenders, who have SERM.
offered to impose their own devices upon men : to XX.
a person bringing with him this sort of assurance
(except when his tale is evidently false and vain,
or his design notoriously wicked and mischievous)
God hath always required, that a ready credence
and obedience should be yielded ; taking it for a
high affront to himself (no less, as St. John says,
than *giving him the lie*) to disbelieve such a person, ^{1 John v.}
and for a heinous contumacy to disobey him : that ^{10.} _{John iii.33.}
it hath been God's ordinary method, the course of
divine history shews. When God separated the pa- ^{Gen. xxi.}
triarchs for the preservation and propagation of his ^{22.}
true religion, he manifested an especial presence with
them, frequently appearing to them, visibly assisting
and blessing them in a more than ordinary manner,
enduing them with a prophetical discretion, and fore-
sight of things : when he would rescue the seed of
those his friends from cruel oppression and hard
slavery, (designing also by them to maintain and
convey down the sincere way of piety,) he imparted
also unto Moses, the especial instrument of those
purposes, a power of doing wonders, thereby pro-
curing authority to his person, and credit to his pre-
tences. Moses did well perceive, and judge, that
had he come without such attestation he should not
have been received or regarded : *But, behold,* said ^{Exod. iv. 1.}
he, *they will not believe me, nor hearken to my*
voice ; for they will say, The Lord hath not ap-
peared unto thee : wherefore God furnished him
with such a power of doing such things as should
assure the truth of his message ; the effect whereof is
thus expressed ; *Israel saw that great work, which*
the Lord did upon the Egyptians ; and the people
^{Exod. iv. 5,}
^{31. xiv. 31.}
^{Deut. iv. 34.}
^{v. 15. vii. 19.}
^{iv. 35, 39.}

SERM. *feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his*
 XX. *servant Moses:* to the promulgation of the law,

and establishment of that particular covenant with
 the Israelites, God did also exhibit significations of
 his presence in a most evident and affecting manner:

Exod. xix. *Lo,* said God to Moses, expressing that matter and
 9. Neh. ix. 13. its design, *I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that*

*the people may hear when I speak with thee, and
 believe thee for ever.* And in the whole conduct
 of that people toward Canaan, God for those ends
 vouchsafed by Moses to perform very great and
 prodigious things; which we may see reckoned up

Ps. lxxviii. in the 78th and 105th Psalms, and in the 9th of
 14. cv. 39. Nehemiah. So also when God employed Elias to

sustain the remainders of decayed piety in Israel
 against the countenance of power given to wicked-
 ness, and, against the stream of popular use, he en-
 dued him with a liberal measure of his Spirit, and
 a power of doing great miracles: the like may be
 observed of all the prophets, judges, and princes,
 who upon special occasions were raised to perform
 considerable services for the glory of God and the
 good of his people. This therefore being God's con-
 stant practice, it cannot but be well supposed, that
 in this case he would not withhold his attestation,
 but would afford it in a most plentiful measure to
 that person who was in dignity so far to excel all
 other his envoys and agents; whose undertaking
 should in importance so vastly transcend all others,
 that ever were set on foot in the world; to him,
 who was to free, not one small people only, but all
 mankind, not from a temporal slavery in Egypt, but
 from eternal misery in hell; to promulge, not a pe-
 dagogy of ritual observances, but a law of spiritual

righteousness ; to establish, not a temporal covenant SERM.
for a little spot of earth, but an everlasting testament XX.
for all the world, importing endless beatitude in hea-
ven. God therefore surely would not balk his road
upon such an occasion, nor refuse his especial testi-
monials to so great a personage, and to so good a
design.

5. If we consider the general reasons assignable,
why God hath been wont to proceed in this man-
ner, or why he should use it upon any occasion, they
are with strongest force applicable to this case. The
most general reasons why God doth ever interpose
extraordinarily, or produce works supernatural, are,
to assert palpably his own divinity and providence ;
strongly to encourage devotion and piety in men :
for he by suspending or thwarting the course of na-
ture plainly declareth himself the maker and master
thereof ; that he freely made the world, and freely
doth uphold it ; that he hath not tied his own hands,
nor confined his power within limits ; but is superior
to and free from all laws, excepting those of inde-
flectible holiness and goodness ; and consequently that
all things do not proceed in a track of dead fatality.
He thereby also assureth us, that he hath an espe-
cial regard unto and a care over men, and wisely
ordereth human affairs by his providence, frequently
(as wisdom directeth and occasion requireth) inter-
posing his hand for the succour, encouragement, and
reward of good men ; that therefore it is not vain to
hope and trust in him ; that prayers and devotions
are available to procure good from him ; that repen-
tance and obedience are no less profitable for us, than
acceptable to him ; that also he freely and justly dis-
penseth recompenses suitable to men's actions volun-

SERM. tarily performed ; that in fine there is a foundation
 XX. of religion, and a ground of justice between God and man : these things are most evidently and effectually demonstrated by extraordinary attestations ; and when therefore could they more seasonably be used, than when God by the Messias intended to call all the world to the acknowledgment and obedience of himself, to the practice of all piety and goodness, with assurances of fit reward, in regard to such practice ? If further to excite men's attention and regard, to breed awe and reverence in men's minds, to confound the impudence, and to bend or break the obstinacy of men, are main ends and proper effects of such testimonies ; whether we consider the Messias's person, the nature of his undertaking, or the persons with whom he was to deal, it is plain (as we have shewed) that his business would best deserve and most need them : no dispensation could better deserve them for worth and consequence ; none could more need them for greatness and difficulty.

Such reasons may be assigned for the necessity and usefulness of divine attestations in this case : but in opposition to these discourses, and in derogation to this way of confirming any truth or authority, it may be said, that no such testifications can well serve to such purposes ; for that the like have been and may be applied to the persuasion of error and impiety by *false prophets* and *antichrists*, by ^{30.}
 Matt. xxiv. *magicians* and *wizards*; who not only have cunningly counterfeited, but really executed very prodigious and wondrous things, in a manner unaccountable to human philosophy. Since also there are wicked spirits, in subtlety and power far exceeding

^{24.}
^{2.} Deut. xiii.
^{2.} Thess. ii.

us, who are able easily to divert the natural course SERM.
of things ; and the limits of whose power in work- XX.
ing so, it is hard for us to discern or define ; * how
can we be assured, that what is done in this kind
doth not proceed from them, but from a virtue di-
vine ? how can it be a certain and convincing argu-
ment of truth ? may we not here object that of
Tertullian, saying, that *our Lord pronouncing that
many impostors should come, and do miracles,
shewed thereby the faith grounded on miracles to
be temerarious*^b.

To this suggestion we may in general return, that Aug. de
seeing the doing such things is the chief and most Civ. Dei, x.
effectual way whereby God, beyond the resistance of
doubt or dispute, can in some cases assure us con-
cerning his mind and will, (whereby he can bestow
honour and credit to any instrument employed by
him, to any revelation proceeding from him,) it can-
not but (notwithstanding that cross instance) rea-
sonably be supposed, that God however doth reserve
the power thereof in some eminent and discernible
manner peculiar to himself, for the promoting his
own service. That also at least God being the au-
thor and establisher of nature, and the continual
sustainer of it by his free providence, it is not likely
that he will suffer the laws and course thereof to be
much violated, except upon occasions very consider-
able, and for very good purposes ; no inferior cause
being able to determine his voluntary influence or

* Πῶς αὖ οὐ σχέτλον ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν ἔργων τὸν μὲν Θεὸν, τοὺς δὲ γούτας
ηγείσθαι; Cels. apud Orig. lib. ii. p. 89.

^b Siquidem edicens multos venturos, et signa facturos, temera-
riam plane signorum et virtutum fidem ostendit, ut apud pseudo-
christianos facillimarum. *Tert. in Marc.* iii. 2.

SERM. providential concourse to the accomplishment of de-
 XX. signs contrary to his will and purpose. That also
 the natural goodness and justice of God, the con-
 stant care and providence he exerciseth over this
 world, the particular relations he beareth toward
 mankind, (as the Maker and Father, the Lord and
 Governor thereof,) the honour and interest of truth,
 of religion, of virtue, (whose protector and patron he
 is, and declareth himself,) the necessary regard he
 also, in connexion with the rest, doth bear to his
 own honour and glory, do all conspire to persuade,
 that God will never endure such things to be per-
 formed in any high manner, so that good and well-
 meaning people shall be very liable to be thereby
 extremely seduced into error; or that himself shall
 be intolerably mocked by the enemies of his glory
 and our good. This may serve to render it probable,
 that the objection is capable of a solution.

But to answer more distinctly and particularly;
 we do grant, that God sometimes for special reasons
 (for wise probation of some persons and just punish-

¹Cor. xi. 19. ment of others; for to approve some men's sincerity

²Thess. ii. 9, 11. and constancy, to detect other men's naughtiness

Deut. xiii. 1, &c. and vanity) may permit such things (in some man-

Matt. xxiv. 24. ner, in some degree such) to be effected by the in-

Rev. xiii. 13. fluence of wicked spirits, or the fraud of wicked

men; yet then it will never be very hard for moderately wise and well-disposed persons to distinguish such feats from those acts which issue from the positive and direct efficacy of God, for authorizing his messengers and confirming his truth: we may usually discern them to come from bad causes by their nature; we may certainly detect them by their design and influence.

There are some things so great, that it is not reasonable to conceive, that any such inferior power is able to do them ; or, if they were able, that God should permit their power actually to be exerted, and to succeed in doing them : such is the making any general or grand alteration in the course of nature ; which being God's great work and establishment, the which he doth, as the prophets speak, govern by a standing law, and preserve according to a perpetual decree, which cannot pass ; yea according to a covenant, which his faithfulness is in a manner engaged to observe ; it is not probable that he will suffer any creature to disturb or disorder : this experience well confirmeth ; for had bad spirits a power of crossing nature so, such is their malice and proneness to do mischief, that the world would soon have been turned by them into confusion and ruin ; that all things therein go in so kindly and steady a course, is an argument of their small power and influence upon things ; that God holdeth the reins fast in his own hands, reserving to himself only as Lord paramount of nature a power to dispense with any of its main laws ; that it is *he alone*, who, as the Psalmist saith, *doeth great wonders*. There are also some things, which although not of so great and general consequence, are yet of so difficult performance, that it is improbable any creature should effect them ; such was the turning of dust into lice, which the devils could not enable the Egyptian sorcerers to perform ; to prepare or dispose so much dust for the reception of souls, and to furnish so many souls for the dust, did, it seems, exceed their ability ; whence they were forced to confess of that miracle done by Moses, *This is the finger of God.*

SERM.
XX.

Jer. v. 22.
xxxiii. 25.
Pa. cxlviii.
26.

Pa. cxxxvi.
4. lxxii. 18.
lxxxvi. 10.
Deut. iii. 24.

Exod. viii.
19.

SERM. XX. There are also things so good, and so beneficial to mankind, that evil spirits may be deemed unable to do them, (God, the fountain of good, retaining them as instruments of his glory, and arguments of his goodness, to his own dispensation,) which also we may presume they would not be willing, were they able, to perform, it being against their disposition or their interest to do it; such are, to dispossess devils, (that is, to divide and weaken their own kingdom;) to discover moral truths of consequence, (that is, to drive men from themselves;) and even to free men from grievous diseases, (that is, to starve their own ἐπτυχαιρεκακία, and malignity;) as is implied in that John x. 21. passage of the gospel, where it is said, *These are not the words of him that hath a devil: Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?* Extraordinary works then, if they are very great, very hard, very good, do thence indicate their cause to be divine: wicked spirits deal only in petty, low, and useless prestigiatory tricks, of small consequence, and no benefit.

But there are further some things infallibly signifying a divine virtue, peculiar to God, and (either by their nature or from the decree of God) incomunicable to any creature, otherwise than as acted by God, or immediately depending on him: such are, the knowledge of future contingent events declared by predicting, or presignifying them, according to that of the prophet; *Show, said he, in way of challenge and conviction to the objects of heathen worship, the things to come, that we may know ye are gods:* such is the discerning men's secret thoughts and intentions, the which God assumeth as proper to himself; *I the Lord search the heart, I* Jer. xvii. 10. xi. 20. xx. 12.

try the reins; so that καρδιογένωτης is a characteris- SERM.
tical attribute, or title, proper to him. Such is the XX.
restitution of men from a state of death to life; a Chron.
work not only in itself most difficult, in respect to xxviii. 9.
the ordinary rule of nature, which it transgresseth, 1 Sam. xvi.
but impossible to any mere creature, without God's Psal. vii. 9.
aid; for that the souls of men when they die return
into God's hand, and enter into a state determined
by his high sentence; whence no creature can fetch
them down, or raise them up; most impossible also
because God by especial decree hath reserved the
power of doing it appropriate to himself; the power
of life and death being his prerogative, who saith,
*I am he, and there is no God * beside me; I kill,* Deut. xxxii.
and I make alive: of whom again it is said, *The* 39.
Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down 1 Sam. ii. 6.
to the grave, and bringeth up. He it is that in his
hand doth hold the keys of hell and of death. The Rev. i. 18.
performing things also by mere word and will, without
application of other force, or any preparation of
the subject-matter, (being equivalent to the work of
creation,) is peculiar unto God, the author of all being,
or to such as act by the immediate help of his
infinite power.

We may add, that there also seem to be some things, which infernal spirits (who continue under restraint and command, within a great awe and dread of their Judge) dare not so much as pretend to or counterfeit; knowing that as presently they shall be Matt. viii.
checked in their attempt, so they shall be grievously 29. Mark i. 24.
chastised for their presumptions; such may be the Luke viii.
assuming to themselves the special names of God,
the directly withholding the extraordinary messengers
of God, and the like.

SERM. So even considering the very nature of strange works may enable us to distinguish them ; but the end and design of such works, together with the influences and effects of them, will further ascertain us of their original : if they are done to abet any gross error, or to promote any mischievous purpose ; if they manifestly do seduce to apostasy from God or goodness ; if they naturally tend to the production of impiety, iniquity, or impurity ; if they do necessarily produce any great disorder or disturbance in the world, assuredly hell is the source of them ; they derive from him whose kingdom and interest they advance ; by their fruits we may know the tree from which they grow. If also they discover ostentation and vanity in the actors, or serve only to gratify idle humour and curiosity in the spectators of them, tending otherwise to no good purpose ; it is easy to collect whence they spring ; that they come from the father both of mischiefs and vanities, who not only delights to abuse us with villainies, but to amuse us also with trifles and fond superstitions.

As, saith Origen, the power of those enchantments in Egypt was not, in itself, like to that admirable power by God's grace vouchsafed to Moses ; so the end did convince those Egyptian feasts to be jugglings, those of Moses to be divine^c.

^{2 Thess. ii.} The portentous things done by the energy of Satan
9. are, as St. Paul calleth them, τέρατα ψεύδους, either false prodigies, or prodigies abetting falsehood and vanity.

^c Ως γὰρ οὐχ ὁμοία δύναμις ἡ τῶν ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ ἐπαδῶν τῇ ἐν τῷ Μωυσῇ παραδέξῃ χάριτι, ἀλλὰ τὸ τέλος διέλεγχε τὰ μὲν τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ὅτα μαργαρεταῖς. Orig. in Cels. 2.

But the works of the most wise and good God, SERM.
as they are commonly works of wonderful majesty XX.
and grandeur, incomparable and inimitable for difficulty : so they always are holy, always useful ; they ever aim at good ends, and produce wholesome fruits : hence we may discern them, and hence we are obliged to acknowledge them ; they afford us ground to say with the Psalmist ; *Unto thee, O Lord, we* Ps. lxxv. 1. *do give thanks ; for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.* Such works, as they can only be effects of God's power, so they are arguments of his truth ; for that he cannot lend his hand, for that he will not prostitute his assistance to the maintenance of any thing, which is not perfectly true and good ; he will not so tempt any man into error. *If* James i. 13.
I by the finger of God cast out devils, then indeed Luke xi. 20. *is the kingdom of God come unto you,* (that is, if I perform works by the divine power, then assuredly is my doctrine true,) was an irrefragable argument.

We may also observe, that those wicked spirits are themselves apprehensive how easily their feats are distinguished from the works of God ; for hence, it seems, they chose to utter them clancularly, in obscure corners, in blind times, among barbarous and silly people ; judging that persons of any wisdom or goodness will be soon able to detect them, and ready to explode them : a little light dazzles *the powers of darkness*, and scares away these spectres ; a little goodness mates their force, enfeebleth and dishearteneth them.

We may also add, that the Messias's works by a peculiar character should be manifestly distinguishable from such as proceeded from infernal powers ; for that it should be his business to impugn, defeat,

SERM. and overthrow the Devil's kingdom; all the falsehoods and superstitions, all the immoralities and impieties, which it consisted in, or which supported it: to this end all his doctrine, practice, and performances would conspiringly tend, that *Satan like lightning should be thrown down from heaven*; which most evidently would evince, that what he should do should only come from heaven.

^{Luke x. 18.} Having thus shewed reasons why, and signified to what purposes, the Messias was to receive special testimonies from God; let us now survey those, which were indeed by him exhibited to Jesus our Lord. There is indeed no kind or degree of attestation needful or proper, which hath not been largely from heaven afforded to him. God (so our Lord argueth) is, in his own nature invisible and indiscernible to any sense of ours; neither could we endure the lustre of his immediate presence. (*No man ever saw God, or can see him; there shall no man see him and live.*) It must be therefore by mediation of signs and works supernatural; the causing of which can only be imputed to him, as beyond the power of any creature to effect or counterfeit; that he can assuredly signify his mind unto us; such only in approbation of any person, law, or doctrine, can be expected from him; and such, in divers kinds, and in great measures, God hath, we say, furnished for the authorizing Jesus.

^{John v. 36.} ^{37.} ^{1 Tim. vi. 16.} ^{Exod. xxxiii. 20.} 1. God did attest to him long before his coming into the world, by presignifying and predicting concerning him, at several times, in several ways, by several persons, (even by all the prophets and eminent persons among his people of old,) many things, even all things considerable about him; in exact

congruity to the circumstances of his coming into SERM.
the world, (the time when, the place where, the fa- XX.
mily whence, the manner how, the condition in
which he was born,) to the qualities of his person,
to the doctrine and law which he published, to all
his undertakings and performances and sufferings,
and to the successes consequent upon what he did.
(This is a matter of very large consideration ; which
otherwhile we have insisted largely upon, and there-
fore shall now wave enlargement on it.)

2. God did in attestation to him immediately send before his face, as his herald and harbinger, a Prophet, or one for his admirable wisdom and sanctity of life somewhat *more than a prophet*; who indeed without doing any miracle, by the prodigious integrity and strictness of his life, by the wonderful efficacy of his doctrine and discourse, procured unto himself a reputation equalling or exceeding that of any former prophet; (whom even Josephus, an indifferent historian, reporteth a man of singular goodness and great authority,) to predispose the minds of men to receive him; by converting men to a serious reflection upon their lives and amendment of their manners, to *prepare his way*; as also to point him out, to foretell of him as presently coming, to testify of him as being come. This was he, to whom it well agreed, and who plainly did assume to himself that which was written by Malachi; *Behold, I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee*; of whom Isaiah (John himself being the avoucher and interpreter) said, *The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight*; who was, as Malachi did again signify, *to come in the spirit and* Mal. iii. 1.
Matt. xi. 10.

Barrow, VOL. V. o Luke i. 23.
Isa. xl. 3.

SERM. *power of Elias, to convert the hearts of the fathers*
 XX. *to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom*
of the just; to make ready a people prepared for
 John i. 15. *the Lord.* This most extraordinary and excellent
 26, 29, 34.
 Matt. iii. 11. person did at several times and occasions attest unto
 Luke iii. 16. Jesus, not only that he was incomparably, for the
 dignity of his person and worth of his performances,
 to be preferred before himself, and consequently be-
 John v. 33. fore all other prophets, but that he was the *very*
Christ, the Lamb of God, the Son of God, the Sa-
aviour of the world: they sent to John, saith the
text, and he bare witness of the truth. God by
 him also foretold divers things concerning our Lord,
 which did really come to pass; as those words, ut-
 John x. 41. tered occasionally by many persons, do imply; *John*
indeed did no miracle; but all things which John
spake of this man were true.

3. God attested unto our Lord by visible appari-
 tions from heaven, at several times, in fit seasons,
 made in the sight and presence of very good wit-
 nesses: angels appearing warned his good father and
 24. Matt. i. 20. blessed mother concerning the time and manner of
 Luke i. 26. Luke ii. 9. his coming into the world; angels again appearing
 &c. uttered tidings of his birth, joined with acclamations
 of praise to God, and gratulations of joy to men;
 Matt. ii. 13. angels were vigilant for his safety, ministered unto
 him in his temptations and needs, assisted and com-
 Matt. iv. 11. fort ed him in the agonies of his passion, waited upon
 Luke xxii. 43. him at his resurrection; an extraordinary star (like
 that of the morning before the sun) officiously did
 Matt. iii. 17. usher him into the world; at his baptism the *Holy*
 Luke iii. 22. *Ghost* (in the symbolical figure of a dove) appeared
descending, and resting upon him, in the presence
 of St. John the Baptist, (that most just and holy

person, so taken and acknowledged by all men, even S E R M. by his enemies and murderers ; and a most competent witness, as who dared with utmost peril before the greatest persons to assert the truth;) *He testified thereof, and said, I saw the Spirit of God descending from heaven as a dove, and resting upon him.* Moses and Elias also (those most eminent instruments of God, and illustrious representatives of the Messias) did from heaven in a most glorious and splendid manner attend upon him, in the presence of three most credible witnesses, Peter, James, and John, the apostles ; one of whom doth himself thus, with the due confidence of an eyewitness, report the fact ; *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were spectators of his majesty—being with him in the holy mountain.*

4. God also by vocal attestation did expressly at several times own and approve Jesus : at his baptism, in the audience of St. John the Baptist and others present there ; when, *Behold there was a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased :* the like heavenly voice was heard at the transfiguration ; *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; hear him : so the gospels report it ;* and thus St. Peter himself, a more immediate witness and attendant there ; *He received from God the Father honour and glory, a voice being brought unto him from the magnificent glory : This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice, which came from heaven, we heard, being with him in the holy mount.* Again, a little before his death, in presence of a multitude, upon

XX.

John i. 31.

Matt. xvii.

Luke ix. 28.

2 Pet. i.

31.

Matt. iii. 17.

Luke iii. 22.

Matt. xvii.

Luke ix. 35.

Mark ix. 7.

2 Pet. i. 17.

S E R M. Jesus's prayer, that God would by him glorify his
XX. name, an audible return was made from heaven;

John xii. 28. *There came, saith the text, a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will again glorify it.*

5. God attested to our Lord in that he was endued with a power constantly resident in him of performing miraculous works, for nature and quality such, as could only proceed from a most divine power; not only thwarting the course of nature, but transcending the strength of any creature, and especially contrary to what any evil creature could or would perform: this was a testimony beyond any human testimony, and which our Lord insisted upon as such;

John v. 36. *I, saith he, have a greater testimony than that of John; for the works which the Father hath granted me, that I should perform them, those very works which I do, they testify about me, that the Father hath sent me.*

Works indeed he performed of a stupendous greatness and difficulty; all the creatures (the most unruly and boisterous, the most malignant and rebellious) beside their natures, and against their wills,

Matt. viii. 26. did obey his commands: in a tempest *he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there became a great calm: so that men did marvel, saying, What manner of man is this, for even the winds and the*

Luke viii. 24, 25. *sea obey him!* the sea stood firm for him and St.

ix. 1.

Matt. viii. 6. Peter to walk upon; he turned water into good

ix. 2, 20, 32.

viii. 3. xii. wine; he unconceivably so improved a few loaves

12. xv. 30.

xx. 34. and little fishes as to feed and satisfy multitudes,

Mark ix. 5.

leaving more behind than there were at first; he cured the most incurable diseases, inveterate palsies, fluxes of blood, and leprosies; he restored senses,

and limbs wanting from the birth, or for a long time; innumerable persons, blind, deaf, dumb, lame, and maimed, he restored to the use of their faculties, and members respectively, without any medicinal applications, or any natural means conducive to those purposes: he restored lunatic persons to their right wits, and dispossessed evil spirits, they not daring to disobey him, and acknowledging his uncontrollable authority; *They were*, saith the text, Matt. xvii. ^{5.} *amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.* These were indeed works of excessive grandeur and difficulty; but he did others far more great and hard; and these were greater for the manner of performing them, than in their own nature: he did other acts so great, that they were only to be done by an infinite power; and most of these he performed in a manner which argued omnipotency present with the doer.

Works proper unto God he did many; such was discerning the thoughts, reasonings, opinions, and purposes of men, however concealed or disguised, whereof we have many instances; and his intimate acquaintance, St. John, testifies of him generally, saying, *He needed not that any should witness about a man, for he knew himself what was in man.* Such was also to forgive sins, (a privilege only belonging to the supreme Lord and Lawgiver, against whom sin is committed;) the which he assumed to himself, and irreprovabley maintained it by exerting a power equivalent thereto; *For whether, said he, is it easier to say, Thy sins be for-* Matt. ix. 5.

SER.M. given thee; or to say, *Arise and walk?* but that
XX. you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) *Arise, take up thy bed, and go to thine house:* and he arose, and departed to his house:

Matt. xvii. such it was likewise to foretell future contingencies; this he often did; as concerning his own passion and resurrection, with all the circumstances of them; particularly the treason of Judas; (*He knew,* Luke xxiv. 27, 29. saith St. John, *from the beginning who they were that did not believe, and who it was that should betray him:*) concerning St. Peter's lapse, repentance, and suffering; concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, and utter demolition of the temple; concerning the persecutions which his disciples should undergo; concerning the communication of the Holy Ghost after his decease, and the propagation of the

Chrys. tom. gospel in the world: such was the foundation of vi. Or. 61. the church upon a rock, against which *the gates of* p. 634, 638. Matt. ix. 25. *hell should not prevail:* such again it was to raise Luke viii. 12. the dead, which he often performed; he raised the Job 31. &c. ruler's daughter, and the widow's son of Naim, and his friend Lazarus; and, *The dead are raised,* is reckoned among the ordinary miracles done by him, in the answer to St. John the Baptist's disciples: Luke vii. 22. these were acts of divine power, which no creature, unassisted by God, could perform.

And considering the manner of performance such were both these and most of the rest; they in that respect emulating God's inimitable work of creation, and in a manner seeming to exceed it; for that it seemeth harder to produce things out of matter indisposed and repugnant, than to bring them out of mere nothing: as God by mere word and will created

things, when he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast; so did Jesus in like manner, by the efficacy of his command, or by actions equipollent thereto, without predisposing the subjacent matter, or using any natural instrument, accomplish his great and strange works: *He rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, Peace, be still;* so he quelled the storm: *I will, be thou cleansed;* so he cured the leper: *Young man, I say unto thee, Arise;* so he revived the widow's son: *O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee as thou desirest;* so he cured the Canaanitish woman's possessed daughter: *He cried out, Lazarus, come forth;* ἐγέλθει ὁ τεθνκώς, so the dead man heard his voice, and presently came forth out of the grave: he said, *Ephphatha, Be opened,* to the deaf man's ears; they immediately heard, and obeyed: he said but one word, Ἀνάβλεψον, *See again,* to the blind man; καὶ παραχρῆμα ἀνέβλεψε, and without more ado he saw again: he did but chide the great fever, with which St. Peter's mother-in-law was troubled, and it left her: he did but take the ruler's daughter by the hand, and the girl revived, and rose up: he only touched the two blind men's eyes, and so their sight was restored: the woman, who had a flux of blood for twelve years, did but touch him, καὶ ιάθη παραχρῆμα, and she thereupon ipso facto instantly was healed: yea multitudes of sick persons together did only endeavour to touch the hem of his garment, and as many as touched it were healed; there went virtue out of him, and healed them all. When he used any thing like means, he, as St. Chrysostom observes, proceeded in ways not only preternatural,

SERM. XX.
Ps. xxxiii. 9.
Mark iv. 39.
Luke v. 12.
Luke vii.
Matt. xv.
^{14.}
^{28.}
John xi. 43.
Mark vii.
Luke iv. 39.
Matt. ix. 25.
Matt. ix. 29.
Luke viii.
^{43, 47.}
Matt. ix. 22.
Matt. xiv.
^{26.}
Luke vi. 19.
^{1 Cor. i. 22.}
Chrys. in
Cor. i. 22.

S E R M. but contrary to nature ; as when he cured the blind
 XX. man in St. John's Gospel, anointing his eyes with
 John ix. 6. clay and spittle : *διὰ πράγματος ἐπιτείνοντος τὴν πήρωσιν,*
ἀνεῖλε· by a thing apt to increase (or strengthen)
blindness, he took it away. So great in nature, so
 high for manner of performance, were the works of
 our Lord ; they plainly were either the works, or
 they were done in the way of omnipotency.

They had also no less of goodness than of greatness divine ; they were all of them plainly works of piety, or works of charity and pity ; of a holy nature and beneficial use ; they were generally performed upon evidently reasonable occasions, or needs ; for the succour and comfort of persons in some want or distress ; or for instruction of the minds and reformation of the manners of men ; for healing the sick, feeding the hungry, easing the afflicted, restoring men to their senses, freeing them from the Devil's tyranny ; for helping men in disappointment and need, or for encouraging kindness and good neighbourhood among people, (to which purpose his first miracle done at Cana served;) for instilling or impressing some wholesome truth, as when the fig-tree 19. Matt. xxi. withered at his command ; for encouraging dutiful 27. Matt. xvii. submission to governors, as when the fish was brought up with a piece of money in his mouth, furnishing him and St. Peter to pay tribute : in fine, the nature and importance of his works St. Peter thus well expressed, saying of him; "Ος διῆλθεν εὐεργετῶν, Who went about doing good, (or benefiting men,) and healing all that were oppressed by the Devil ; for God Matt. ix. 35. was with him : and the evangelist thus ; Jesus went iv. 23. xv. 30. about all the cities, teaching in their synagogues,

and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. SERM. XX.

Considering which things, we may well discern by what power and to what purpose Jesus did perform his admirable works ; and may repel from our hearts all the cavils or calumnies forged by malicious and vain wits (such as those of Celsus and Julian) in derogation to them ; we may particularly perceive how impudently false that suggestion was of the apostate emperor ; who said that Jesus, *while he lived, did nothing worthy hearing, except one suppose to heal cripples and blind folk, and to exorcise demoniacs in the villages Bethsaida and Be-thany, to be great works*^d: in opposition to which kind of suggestions, and for abundant confirmation of our purpose, we may consider some advantageous circumstances and concordances of our Lord's performances.

They were, we may observe, not some few things done at one time, or in one place, among friends and partisans ; but innumerable many and frequent, (a John xxi. world of things, more than well could be recited, as²⁵. St. John telleth us,) done through a long course of time, (for some years together,) in several places, before all sorts of people, many of them very ill-affected towards him. They *were not done* clancu-^{Acts xxvi.} larly *in a blind corner*, among rude and simple people ; but openly and visibly every where about Iudea, the most lightsome place for knowledge and

^d Ἐργασάμενος παρ' ὁν ἔξη χρόνον οὐδὲν ἀκοῆς ἔξιν, εἰ μὴ τις αἴται τοὺς κυλλούς, καὶ λαφούς ιᾶσθαι, καὶ τοὺς δαιμονῶντας ἐξορκίζειν ἐν Βεθσαδῇ, καὶ ἐν Βηθανίᾳ ταῖς κώμαις τῶν μεγίστων ἔργων εἶναι. Cyr. adv. Jul. lib. 6.

SERM. goodness in the world ; where the best worship of
 XX. God most flourished, and all diabolical impostures

were most detested, in the places there most public
 and conspicuous ; so he could affirm and admonish

John xviii. them ; *I speak freely to the world ; I always
 20. taught in the synagogues, and in the temple,*

where the Jews from all places resort ; and in secret have I done nothing : they were done so
 apparently, that the people generally saw them, and
 acknowledged them ; that scarce any man could be
 ignorant of them ; that the most learned and
 considerate men took it for granted, that they were
 done ; that adversaries could not deny the perform-
 ance of them, although out of envy and ill-will they
 were ready to impute it to the worst causes devis-
 able ; that many of all sorts were convinced, and di-
 vers converted by them : as for the people,

Great multitudes, saith St. Matthew, one present, and a
30, 31. follower of our Lord, *came unto him, having with*

*them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed,
 and many others, and cast them down at Jesus's
 feet ; and he healed them : insomuch that the mul-
 titude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak,
 the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the
 blind to see ; and they glorified the God of Israel :*

*Matt. ix.
 33, 34.* and, *The people marvelled, saying, It was never so
 seen in Israel ; but the Pharisees said, He casteth*

*out devils by the prince of the devils : the matter
 of fact they could not offer, against conviction of
 sense, to question ; but malice prompted perversely
 and foolishly to assign a bad cause thereof : the
 matter was so notorious, that St. Peter could thus*

Acts ii. 22. confidently appeal to the whole nation ; *Ye men of
 ἄποινται
 Israel, hear these words ; Jesus of Nazareth, a*

*man approved (or demonstrated) unto you by mi- SERM.
racles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by XX.
him in the midst of you ; as you yourselves know.*

The adversaries (such whom superstitious prejudices, obstinate humours, or corrupt affections, envy, pride, ambition, avarice, or the like, had made adversaries to him) did not only see the thing, but were affrighted with its consequence ; *The chief priests*, it is John xi. 47. said, *and the Pharisees gathered a counsel together, and said; What shall we do, for this man doeth many wonders ? if we let him alone, all men will believe on him :* yes indeed, notwithstanding all this watchful caution and fine policy of theirs, notwithstanding all the opposition and discouragement they could interpose, all their strugglings to smother his credit and doctrine, many were in their hearts convinced, even divers of such as were unwilling to believe, and ashamed or afraid to avow their persuasion ; *Also, it is said again, of the rulers many be-* John xii. *lieved on him ; but because of the Pharisees they* ^{42.} *did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue :* Nicodemus, an honest and ingenuous person, a man of honour, (but somewhat wary and timorous,) came secretly, and in the name (it seemeth) of many persons alike disposed with himself thus spake : *Rabbi, we know that thou hast come a* John iii. 2. *teacher from God ; for no man can do those things which thou doest, except God be with him.* As for the generality of the people, (the most unconcerned in such cases as to point of honour and interest, and thence the most impartial and sincere party,) they following their senses were greatly affected and astonished with what he did ; taking him for a very extraordinary person ; some in a gross and confused

SER.M. manner, others in a more distinct way of belief;

XX. *Some said he was John the Baptist; others, that*

Mark xvi. *he was Elias; others, Jeremiah, or one of the an-*
14. *cient prophets risen up again: but many of the*

Luke ix. 19. *people (more fully and exactly) believed on him,*
John vii. 31. *saying, When Christ cometh, will he do more mi-*

ii. 23. *racles than this man hath done?*

We may also observe, that Jesus did not affect to perform wonders out of vanity, or to humour men's curiosity, but always upon inducements of piety and charity: most of them were performed occasionally at the desire of men, suggested by their needs; and all of them for their edification or comfort; that he therefore did not seek by them to acquire reputation, or applause to himself; nor by them designed to advance any private interest of his own, but singly aimed at the promotion of God's glory in them all: that in effect no secular advantage of dignity or wealth or pleasure did from them accrue to himself; but rather disgrace and obloquy, hatred and enmity, trouble and pain, did from them befall him; all the glory of them purely coming to God, and all the benefit to men. As he charged his disciples, so he practised himself, doing all *gratis*, and freely,
Matt. x. 8. without expecting or accepting any requital. He often studiously concealed his miracles, forbidding
Matt. viii. 4. xii. 16. those who were concerned in them, or conscious of
ix. 30. them, to publish them; so striving to decline or to
Mark v. 43. vii. 36. viii. 26. John v. 41. stifle the honour, naturally emergent from them.
viii. 49. 50. 54. 24. v. 30. xiv. 10. When it was necessary or expedient they should appear, he disclaimed being the principal author of them, referring and ascribing them to God: *I can*, said he, *do nothing of myself*: and, *The word that I speak to you, I speak not of myself; but the Fa-*

ther who abides in me, he doeth the works : and, I SERM.
seek not mine own glory ; I receive not glory of XX.
men : thus he professed, and so he practised : conse-
quently the effect was, that (as it is expressed in
the Gospels), fear, or a pious reverence, did seize all Luke vii.
men ; and they glorified God, saying, That a great 16. ix. 43.
Prophet is risen up among us ; and, That God hath xviii. 43.
visited his people : All the people seeing it gave Matt. ix. 8.
praise to God : All men were amazed at the mighty xv. 30.
power (or majesty) of God : When the multitude
saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which
had given such power unto men. And doth not so
much glory from his performances resulting to God,
so good an influence upon the hearts of men, evi-
dently shew whence the power effecting them was
derived ? would the Devil be such an instrument of
God's praise ?

We may also with St. Irenæus observe, that Jesus, Iren. ii. 58.
in performing his cures and other miraculous works,
did never use any profane, silly, phantastic cere-
monies ; any muttering of barbarous names or insigni-
ficant phrases ; any invocation of spirits, or inferior
powers ; any preparatory purgations, any mysterious
circumstances of proceeding, apt to amuse people ;
any such unaccountable methods or instruments, as
magicians, enchanters, diviners, circulatorious jug-
glers, and such emissaries of the Devil, or self-seeking
impostors, are wont to use ; but did proceed
altogether in a most innocent, simple, and grave
manner, with a majestic authority and clear sin-
cerity, becoming such an agent of God as he pro-
fessed himself to be.

That also the whole tenor of his proceedings was
directly levelled against the kingdom of darkness ;

SER.M. against all the impiety, all the malice, all the filthiness, and all the fallacy thereof; at the casting wicked and impure spirits, not only from the bodies, but out of the souls of men; causing men not only to detest and defy them, but to loathe their qualities, and to eschew their works: this is that binding

Luke xi. 21. Matt. xii. 29. disarming, rifling, and dispossessing *the strong one*, which Jesus alleged as an infallible argument, that he was not only no friend, but a mighty enemy to the infernal powers; an enemy, not only in disposition and design quite contrary, but in virtue and force highly superior to them: that we should worship God alone with most hearty reverence and love; that we should bear the same clear good-will to all men as we do to ourselves; that we should be strictly just, veracious, and sincere in our words and dealings, meek and humble in our spirits, pure and sober in all our enjoyments, (things perfectly opposite to the temper and interests of hell,) were things, which as our Lord constantly in his doctrine did inculcate, so he countenanced and furthered them by his works; from whence assuredly we may collect, that they came from heaven, and were intended for the promoting God's service: hell would never contribute so much to its own disgrace and disadvantage, would never so industriously concur to defeat and destroy itself; God plainly reaped the benefit by Jesus's works, he therefore certainly did plant them and bless them.

Upon these considerations it appeareth sufficiently, that in correspondence to the reason and exigency of the case, our Lord did perform innumerable works, which had impressed on them the truest and highest characters of divinity; the most peculiar grandeur,

and perfectest goodness ; the purest holiness of design, and the beneficial tendency proper to the works issuing from divine power ; so that supposing God should send the Messias into the world, or any great ambassador from himself, he could scarce possibly, he should not at least, all things considered, need to furnish him with more convincing attestations, than he hath exhibited to our Lord. Whence we may well apprehend the validity of that argument, which our Lord himself suggested for assurance of St. John the Baptist in his opinion concerning him, or rather for the satisfaction of St. John's disciples ; when John sent two of his disciples, with this inquiry, *Art thou Matt. xi. 5.
he, or look we for another?* Jesus thus replied ; *Go Luke vii.
22.* *your way, and tell John what things ye have seen
and heard ; how that the blind see, the lame walk,
the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead
are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached ;
and blessed is he, whoever shall not be offended
in me.*

6. God most signally did attest to our Lord by miraculously raising him from the dead ; or in that by a divine power he raised up himself from the grave ; which work, for the singular greatness and high consequence thereof, together with the certain evidence that it was really performed, might alone suffice to confirm the verity of all our Lord's pretences ; [that he was the true *Messias*, the *Son of God*, the *Saviour of the world*, the *Lord of all things*, the *Judge of all the world* ;] most efficaciously to evince and persuade the most eminent and important parts of his doctrine, (the immortality of our souls, the resurrection of our bodies, the just and wise providence of God over men, the

SER.M. dispensation of rewards and punishments hereafter,
 XX. answerable to men's conversation and practice in
 this life.) This indeed is the point, which invincibly
 guardeth and fortifieth all other testimonies ; but it
 is so pregnant of considerations belonging to it, that
 it deserveth more time and room than we now can
 yield it ; wherefore we choose rather at present to
 pass it over, than slightly to touch it, reserving it
 for a peculiar subject of discourse.

7. A further attestation was given to our Lord
 by the power of doing miracles in his name impart-

Omnis hec
 nostra in
 illos domi-
 natio et po-
 testas de
 Christi no-
 minatione
 valet, &c.
Tert. Apol.
 23.
 Acts iii. 16.

ed to the disciples ; who by him were appointed and
 authorized to prosecute the great design commenced
 by himself : not only his person, but even his name
 did great wonders ; it cured diseases, it cast out de-
 vils, it surmounted nature, and subdued hell : where-
 by he indeed appears, for especial favour with God,

personal excellency, dignity of office, importance of
 undertaking, incomparably to have surpassed all for-
 mer prophets and commissioners of God, by whose
 ministry any law, covenant, or doctrine, hath been
 conveyed to men ; never by delegation or in depend-
 ence upon any other person, never in any other per-
 son's name, were such works done. To the twelve
 apostles at their first mission he among other in-

Matt. x. 8. structions enjoined thus ; *Cure the sick, cleanse the
 lepers, cast out devils ; ye have freely received,
 freely give :* to the seventy disciples, sent out by
 himself to instil the rudiments of his doctrine, and
 to admonish people of his approach, he gave this

Luke x. 8, commission and charge ; *In any city into which you
 enter, heal those which are sick therein ; and say
 unto them, The kingdom of heaven is come near
 unto you :* he then adds ; *Behold, I give you power*

9, 19.

to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon SERM.
all the power of the enemy: the success was, that ^{XX.}
they returned with joy, saying, *Lord, even the* ^{Luke x. 17.}
devils are subject unto us through thy name. At
his departure he promised and foretold thus; *These* ^{Mark xvi.}
signs shall follow them that believe; In my name ^{17.}
they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with
*new tongues; they shall *take up serpents;* and ^{*Aēnūs.}
if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt
them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they
shall recover: all which things were abundantly
fulfilled; for a liberal communication of divine power
was granted to them, enabling them to perform the
greatest works; so that, as St. Luke telleth us, *by* ^{Acts ii. 4.}
the hands of the apostles many wonders and signs ^{43. v. 12.}
were done among the people; the performance of
which was so notorious, that upon knowledge, and
in confidence thereof, *there came,* saith the holy ^{Luke vi. 17.}
historian, *a multitude out of the cities round about* ^{18.} ^{Acts viii.}
unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them ^{17.}
which were vexed with unclean spirits, and they
were healed every one. * The like power also was ^{Heb. ii. 4.}
by the apostles derived unto others, in such kind ^{Rom. xv.} ^{18.}
and measure, as the carrying on Jesus's great design
(the propagation of God's truth and the edification
of his church) did require; by succession it was
transmitted through several ages, and visibly con-
tinued so long, as such extraordinary means were
useful or expedient for the conviction and conver-
sion of the world; most of the first Fathers of the
church do expressly testify concerning remainders
thereof in their times: *It is not possible* (saith St. Iren. ii. 48.
Irenæus for one instance, among others innumerable)
to tell the number of the graces (or special gifts)

SER.M. which the church through the whole world receiving from God doth, in the name of Jesus Christ, crucified under Pontius Pilate, daily perform for the succour of the nations, &c. And remarkable is the confidence of Tertullian, reporting the effects of this power in his time : he in his apologetic speech for the Christians even dares to provoke the ethnic governors to trial, and to lay the issue concerning not only the truth of Christian doctrine, but the

Tert. Apol. lives and safety of its professors thereon ; *Let, saith*
^{23.} *he, any person, manifestly possessed with the Devil,*
or one who is deemed to be rapt with a divine fury,
be set before your tribunals; that spirit, being com-
manded by a Christian to speak, shall as truly
there confess himself to be a devil, as elsewhere
a god—If he do not so confess, not daring to lie,
even there spill the blood of that procacious Chris-
tian: What, adds he, is more manifest than that
work? what more faithful than that probation?
Stand not to these sayings, if your eyes and ears
will suffer you. The like assertions and challenges
 might be produced out of divers other Fathers.

Τῆς δυνάμεως τῶν ἐπικαίρων θελητῶν πολλαὶ λαύραι.
 Chrys. de Sacerd. 4.
 in Joh. Or. 24. in Psal.
 142. Aug. iii.
 16. Retract. i. 13.

Neither perhaps is the communication of this divine virtue so ceased now, that it would be wanting upon any needful occasion ; the frequent performance of such works among them in whom faith by abundance of other competent means may be produced and confirmed, unto whom also the first miracles are virtually present by the help of history and good reason, is indeed nowise necessary, nor perhaps would be convenient ; but did the same pious zeal for God's honour, and the same charitable earnestness for men's good, excite any persons now to attempt the conversion of infidels to the sincere

Christian truth, I see no reason to doubt, but that SERM.
such persons would be enabled to perform whatever XX.
miraculous works should conduce to that purpose;
for *the Lord's hand is not shortened*, the grace of ^{Isa. lix. 1.}
^{1. 2.} Christ is not straitened, the name of Jesus hath not
lost its virtue.

8. God did attest to our Lord by accomplishing ^{The Spirit of God doth attest to him.} his prediction and promise, in a plentiful *effusion of the divine Spirit upon his church and disciples, ^{John xv. 26.} for their perfect instruction and guidance, for their ^{Acts v. 32.} support and comfort, for enabling them to convince ^{7, 8.} and convert men to him; *When* (said our Lord to ^{1 Cor. xii.} them before his decease, concerning this attestation) ^{* Acts x. 45.} *the Comforter is come, whom I will send to you from my Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:* ^{John v. 7, 8.} *and, Tarry ye* (said he again, after his resurrection) ^{Luke xxiv. 49.} *in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.* ^{Acts i. 4.} ^{ii. 33.} ^{Acts iv. 31.} ^{viii. 17. x.} ^{44. xi. 15.} ^{xiii. 52. xix. 6.}

Accordingly soon after our Lord's ascension, as ^{1 Cor. xii.—} the Holy Spirit was conspicuously dispensed, upon various occasions, in divers proportions, and in different ways, according to the exigencies of things, for the edification and enlargement of the church; so especially at Pentecost it was in a most solemn manner and abundant measure poured forth upon the whole church and each member of it; *For* ^{Acts i. 15.} *then, saith St. Luke, the disciples (to the number of one hundred and twenty persons) being gathered together—with one accord, in one place;—suddenly* ^{Acts ii. 1—} *there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind,* (which was a most proper emblem of the Holy Spirit's nature and powerful efficacy,) *and*

SERM. it filled all the house where they were sitting,
 XX. (which then typified the catholic church, through
 which the Holy Spirit was to be diffused, to animate
 and actuate it;) and there appeared unto them
Mετέπειπαν δὲ τὸ Χαρο- μάτων δια- φορ. Naz. Orat. 44.
 cloven tongues like as of fire, (denoting the various
 gifts and graces imparted for expression of God's
 praise and propagation of his truth, which were to
 be enlivened by fervent charity, zeal, and devotion,) and it sat upon each of them; implying that every
 faithful Christian constantly should partake of this
 heavenly benefit, according to his need; and they
 were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to
 speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them
 utterance: that is, they were perfectly inspired, so
 that each was endowed with the gift of speaking a
 language before unknown to him; which was a mi-
 racle very great, and most pertinent; to learn a
 strange tongue requiring much time and great pains;
 the speaking such tongues being then very service-
 able to the promulgation of the gospel: all which
 event was very public and notorious; for that at
 that festival-time there were, saith the divine histo-
 rian, dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men, out
 of every nation under heaven. Now when this
 was noised about, the multitude came together, and
 were confounded, because that every man heard
 them speak in his own language—the wonderful
 things of God.

This was therefore a general attestation to our Lord, pregnant and clear as could be, both for conviction of unbelievers and confirmation of the faithful; the which effects it had; so that in virtue thereof, St. Peter having explained the design of it,

three thousand souls were added to the church; and all did continue stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship.

SERM.
XX.

Acts ii. 41,
42.

Besides also it was an illustrious pledge of that inestimable gift, to be perpetually communicated to the church for its edification, and to each Christian for his direction and assistance in religious practice, according to the evangelical covenant; the which is a standing witness, attesting to our Lord, in the heart and conscience of every good man, according to that of St. Peter; *And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him:* he indeed keeping his residence and exerting his power in all pious souls; shining into their minds with *the true heavenly light,* (that *pure and perfect wisdom, which is from above;*) kindling charity, devotion, comfort, and joy in their hearts; supporting them in trials and temptations; raising their affections and desires above this present transitory world; disposing them to relish spiritual things, and to entertain themselves with the hopes of future blessedness; doth assure them, that *Jesus is the Lord;* doth seal to them the truth of his doctrine, the reality of his promises, the efficacy of his grace, the wonderful greatness of his love and goodness toward them; so that hence that is abundantly verified which St. John telleth us, *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.*

There are divers other considerable attestations to our Lord; such as the divine sublimity of his doctrine, discovering itself to enlightened minds to shine from heaven; the testimony of God's Spirit to the hearts and consciences of good and faithful

¹ Cor. xii. 3.

Rom. viii.

16.

Gal. iv. 6.

² Cor. i. 22.

iv. 2. v. 5.

Eph. i. 13.

iv. 30.

¹ Johu v.

SER M. people, assuring them that *Jesus is the Lord*, and
 XX. sealing to them the truth of his doctrine; the opera-
Rom. viii. 16.
Gal. iv. 6.
2 Cor. i. 22.
v. 5. iv. 2.
Eph. i. 13.
iv. 30.
1 Cor. xii. 3.
1 John v.
10.
O πειρασμούς
την τέλος
τοῦ Θεοῦ Ιχνούς
τὰ μαρτυρεῖ
αὐτὸν λαύρη.

tion of God's grace in production of moral virtues, or the purgation of heart and amendment of life flowing from faith in him, the efficacy of prayers in his name offered to God ; all the joys, and comforts, and happy fruits springing from Christian devotion ; the good effects the gospel hath had in reformation of the world inducing many great benefits, and preventing mischiefs therein : but these and the like, being not so public, so distinctly observable, so easily drawn into argument, apt to convince the incredulous, I shall pass over ; adding but one more of a more general and conspicuous nature.

9. Lastly, God hath attested unto our Lord by the wonderful success which hath attended his gospel in its conveyance and propagation : its, in so short a time, so generally prevailing in the hearts of men, triumphing over the mightiest oppositions, subduing the world to the faith and obedience of itself, accomplished by means so insufficient, and by ways so improbable, may seem to reason no less a miracle of Providence against the course of human affairs, than the rest performed by him, or for him, were miracles to sense, above the power of natural causes, both arguing the presence and assistance of omnipotency : the work was *a victory over the world* and over hell, achieved *by the faith of Jesus* ; and that a very strange one, whether we consider the combatants who fought for him, or the adversaries against whom, or the weapons by which, or the manner how they strove, or the very cause itself, which they maintained for him.

They were *not many wise, not many mighty, not SERM. many noble*, but a very few, mean and poor, unlearned and simple men, whom no outward circumstances commended to human regard, no worldly ^{Cor. i. 26.}
^{Ἄγαρ μη-}
^{τε, ταὶ πᾶν-}
^{τι.}
^{Acts iv. 13.} advantage furthered in pursuance of their design, who had nothing visible to rely on, to hearten, to support them in their endeavours: a few fishermen, publicans, tent-makers, and other persons of like quality, education, improvement, and capacity, were the instruments of this great work; those brave soldiers of Christ, who boldly set themselves in array against all his adversaries: and what adversaries were they? who, but all the majesty and authority, all the force and violence, all the policy and craft, all the wit, learning, wisdom, and eloquence, all the passion and rage of men, all the power, cunning, and malice of the cursed spirits; in short, all the forces and endeavours of earth and hell combined against them^c. They were to check and control the ambitions, interests, pleasures of mighty emperors and potentates; whose assumed divine honours they decried as vain and wicked; whose commands they reprehended as unjust and impious; to whose power and pleasure they prescribed restraints, declaring them obliged to contain their practice within bounds of piety, equity, and temperance: they were to suppress the credit and the gain of all priests or ministers of religion in the world, whose

* Clemens Alexandrinus well says, that no philosophy would have endured such a test, or endured such a shock of persecution.

Καὶ τὴν μὲν φιλοσοφίαν τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν ἐὰν ὁ τυχὸν ἀρχεὺς κωλύσῃ, οἴκεται ταραχῆμα, τὴν δὲ ἡμετέραν, &c. Strom. vi. (p. 502.)

Καίτοι γε μηρίων ὅσουν καλυμάτων γενομένων πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐπισπαρῆναι τὴν Ἱητῶν διδασκαλίαν τῇ οἰκουμένῃ. Orig. cont. Cels. vii. (p. 349.)

SERM. doctrines they condemned as vain and silly, whose
XX. practices they reprobated as vile and damnable : they
were to confute all the subtilty of philosophers, all
the eloquence of orators, all depths of learning, and
improvements of reason or wit ; impugning the
opinions famous and current among men as false, or
slighting them as frivolous : they were to overbear
and master the prejudices of all people, fortified by
natural inclination and temper, by countenance of
long tradition and custom ; by education, by public
laws, and all so mighty enforcements : they were to
charge with reproach all ages past, and the ances-
tors of all people in the world, (those of one small
people only in part excepted,) of very gross igno-
rance and error, of sottish folly, of heinous wicked-
ness and impiety : they were to sustain all the ala-
nders, reproaches, and persecutions which the reso-
lute opposing so many interests, humours, and opin-
ions inevitably would produce : they were beside vi-
gorously to assault Satan and all his complices ; to
beat down his worship, and overturn his domina-
tion ; to baffle all his craft and might, to stop his
mouth, to bind his hands, to tread upon his neck.

All these great exploits they were to achieve in a
most quiet and peaceable manner, in a way most
plain and simple, without any terror or tumult, any
sleight or artifice, any plausibility of language, or
subtilty of reasoning ; without applying either any
rude violence or sly allurement : they were indeed
little more than barely to report a story, and to af-
firm it true of their own knowledge, adjoining in
connection with that story some plain honest rules
of life here in this world, and denouncing some con-
sequences on the belief of their story and the prac-

tice of their rules in another world hereafter. These SER M.
things it was their business to tell simply, and to XX.
aver confidently, charging men at their utmost peril ^{1 Cor. iv. 5.}
to believe them; boldly condemning whatever thing ^{2 Cor. iv. 7.}
_{xii. 9.} and what person soever should oppose their report
or doctrine: they were not to assay the persuading
this or dissuading from the contrary by fine strains
of speech, or with acute *enthymemes*; but to pro- ^{1 Cor. ii. 4.}
pose it without care or circumstance, in such a
homely dress and naked plainness of speech, that
even children and idiots might easily comprehend
the main of their sense and drift: all the strength,
the ornament, the charm of their discourse consisted
in the clear sincerity shining through it; joined
with a constant adherence to their doctrine, an
earnest diligence in promoting it, an admirable pa-
tience in joyfully suffering all contumelies and ad-
versities incident to them for its sake; accompanied
also with a blameless innocence and integrity of life,
a sweet calmness of mind and meekness of beha-
viour, together with a kind and charitable disposi-
tion toward all men: these were all the human or
natural *weapons of their warfare*; with which ^{2 Cor. x. 4.}
alone, God's help concurring, they did (to use St.
Paul's words) *pull down strong holds, and cast*
down imaginations, and every high thing that
exalteth itself against the knowledge of God;
bringing into captivity every thought to the obe-
dience of Christ: in this strange manner did they
maintain their cause:

A cause indeed, which of itself did not seem likely
to prosper in the world, having in itself so little of
plausibility, and affording to the embracers thereof ^{Vide Chrys.}
so very small encouragement: which enjoined to its ^{tom. vi. Or.}
_{61. p. 635.}

SERM. followers the worship and imitation of a Person
 XX. lying under extreme disadvantages in the eye of man ; who had lived in a very mean condition, and had suffered a most ignominious death; whom therefore to be obliged to adore and obey could not but to the ordinary sense of men appear very offensive : which again recommended a doctrine little grateful, or rather very cross, to the natural propensions, to the current principles, to the secular advantages of men ; which indulged men in nothing that they were apt to like, but greatly curbed and checked them in the use of their liberties, gratification of their fancies, and enjoyment of their pleasures ; which much disparaged all the pleasing goods, and all the flattering glories of the world ; charging men never much to affect or seek them, sometimes utterly to quit and renounce them ; freely choosing in their stead to undertake a cross with all its pains and disgraces, which propounded it as an essential ingredient of itself, or a condition necessary for all that should avow it, to *circumcise the heart, to mortify the deeds of the body, to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts; to cut off right hands, and pull out right eyes*; to part with all their fortunes, to hate their relations, to sacrifice their lives, if they were thereto called, for its sake ; which rendered men, as it were, dead to all present fruitions, and unconcerned in all hopes here ; engaging them entirely to place their contents and happiness in a reversion of things invisible and future : they, in fine, did hold forth a doctrine to the sense of flesh and blood full of most rigid laws, severe rules, harsh conditions, and *hard sayings*, apt to choke the faith of men, and to obstruct its entertainment with them.

Rom. viii.

^{13.}
Gal. v. 24.

' Now that a handful of such persons, against S E R M.
such obstacles, in ways so preposterous, and differ- XX.
ent from the course of human proceedings, were
able to render so unlikely a cause so absolutely vic-
torious; so that suddenly all the might, wit, and
eloquence of men did stoop unto it, and serve under
it; that the majesty of the greatest princes gladly
veiled thereto, that the prudence of statesmen cor-
dially did approve it, that all the learning of the
world yielded itself up captive and tributary thereto,
that all superstition vanished before it, and all the
force of hell sunk under it; is it not a huge argu-
ment, that God himself did in favour thereof inter-
pose his omnipotent arm; that to the Lord of hosts
(unto whom, as king Asa said, *it is nothing to help*,<sup>2 Chron.
xiv. 11.</sup>
whether with many, or with them that have no<sup>1 Sam. xiv.
6.</sup>
power: to whom it is indifferent to *save by many*^{6.}
Rom. xv. 8.
or by few) this glorious victory is to be ascribed,
who thereby pleased to accomplish his ancient pro-
mises, to maintain his holy truth, to further the sal-
vation of his creatures, to promote his own glory,
and especially to magnify the name of his only be-
loved Son Jesus, our ever blessed Lord? to *whom*
for ever and ever be all praise. Amen.

Having thus largely endeavoured to shew that Je-
sus our Lord is the Messias, and consequently sup-
posing the truth of the Christian doctrine; let us

¹ Τὸ δῆμα δκεῖνο, τὸ οἰκοδομήσας μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, τοῦτο πάντα εἰργά-
σσατο, τουστοι γὰρ οἱ τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγοι, ἔργων δημιουργοὶ, ἔργων θαυμαστῶν καὶ
ταραδέξιων, &c. Chrys. tom. vi. Oral. 61. p. 636.

Πῶς ὅν τοσούτων πρᾶγμα μετὰ τοσούτων καιώματων καὶ πίρας ἔσχεν
ἄπω λαμπρὸν, καὶ ἔκβασιν μαρτυροῦσαν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, εἰ μὴ θεία τις καὶ
ἀμαχος δυνάμις ἦν τοῦ ταῦτα εἰπόντος, καὶ τελέσαντος, &c. ibid. p.
637.

SERM. now briefly recapitulate and explain in what manner
 XX. and in what respects the New Testament represents
 him as *Christ*; how, according to that, Jesus was
 signally chosen and consecrated by God, in a man-
 ner supereminent, to all the offices denoted by the
 title Christ, (the office *prophetical, regal, and sacerdotal,*) and how he effectually doth execute them.

Acts x. 38. Him, saith St. Peter in general, God anointed
 with the Holy Spirit and power: God anointed
 him, not with an external affusion of material oil,
 (as neither were the patriarchs, nor king Cyrus, who
 are yet called *the Christs of God*;) that was only
 a ritual and symbolical business; but with a real
 infusion of divine grace and power, qualifying and
 enabling him perfectly to execute all those great and

Ps. xlv. 7. extraordinary functions. With this gladsome oil he
Luke iv. 1. Luke iv. 1. was thoroughly anointed and replenished above mea-
John iii. 34. John iii. 34. sure: with this he was *sanctified from the womb*:
Luke ii. 35. when the *power of the Highest did overshadow him* at his conception: with this at his baptism he

Matt. iii. 16. Matt. iii. 16. was solemnly and visibly inaugurated; when *the heavens were opened unto him, and the Spirit of God descended upon him as a dove, and came upon him*: with this in all the course of his life and min-
 istry he was continually accompanied; the virtue of
 it being discovered and diffused in most sensible ef-
 fects of wise and gracious discourse, holy and blame-
 less conversation, wonderful and glorious perform-
 ances, for the honour of God and the benefit of man-
 kind, to the delight and consolation of all well-dis-

Acts x. 38. posed minds: *God anointed Jesus of Nazareth,* saith St. Peter in the Acts, *with the Holy Ghost;*
who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil; for God was with

him. He was by this spiritual unction constituted SERM. in right and in effect a *Prophet*, a *King*, a *Priest*. XX.

1. First, a *Prophet*: for they were not mistaken, John vi. who, upon his raising the widow's child, were *amazed*-Luke vii. 16. ed, and glorified God, saying, *That a great Prophet was raised up among them*, and that God had visited his people. Nor they (in St. John's Gospel) who, reflecting upon another great miracle, (feeding multitudes with five loaves and two little pickled fishes,) brake into this confession; *This is in truth John vi. 14. that Prophet who was to come into the world.*

And the disciples well described him, who styled him, a *Prophet mighty in word and deed, before Luke xxiv. God and all the people*. He was so, as having an ^{19.} *Eἰτι διεῖνε-*
ονγενῆς, δι-
χριστός. extraordinary commission from God, declared by vocal attestation of God himself from heaven, by ^{8.} Matt. xxiii.
express testimony of St. John the Baptist, (*the person of most remarkable sanctity and greatest authority in his time*,) by the performance of innumerable and incomparable signs and works miraculous; (*arguments in the highest degree and to the utmost possibility sufficient to assert and confirm it.*) He was also in greatest perfection qualified for the exercise of that function, by inspiration complete ^{1 Pet. ii. 22.} and unlimited; by disposition of mind altogether pure ^{2 Cor. v. 21.} ^{1 John iii.} and holy; (expressed in a continual practice of life ^{5.} void of all sin and guile; by an insuperable courage and constancy, a transcendent wisdom and discretion, an incomparable meekness and patience, a most winning sweetness and goodness, a most powerful awfulness and majesty, shining in all his discourse and demeanour.)

Suitable also to the authority of his commission and the qualifications of his person, were the weight

SERM. and the extent of the doctrine he in God's name revealed; it concerning no less than the salvation of mankind, and reconciliation of the world to God; the entire will of God, and whole duty of man; with all the laws and precepts, the covenants and conditions, the promisings and threatenings, relating to our future state. He did not (as other prophets have done) prophesy about the constitution of one particular law, religion, or covenant; about the reproof or reformation of one state, the judgment or fate determined to one nation; but his design reached to the instruction and conversion of all people, in all places, through all times, to the settling of a law and covenant absolutely universal and perpetual: mysteries he brought forth never before revealed, and decrees never to be reversed; to the final doom of all the world did his prophetical denunciations extend. So is he a *Prophet*. Such he was in his temporal appearance and administrations upon earth; and such he continues for ever in heaven; from thence upon all occasions by his holy Spirit imparting to his faithful people all needful instruction in truth, direction in practice, admonition to duty, and comfort in trouble. He is also such by the ministry of his servants, whom he hath appointed, and whom he assists, to instruct and guide us.

2. He is also a *King*, by many unquestionable titles, of a great and extensive authority, exercising it to the best effects and purposes. He is a King by *nature* and *birth*; as *the only Son of God*, partaker of his eternal power and majesty; for therefore to him it was said, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre*: and as *the Son of David*; for of him

the angel said, *The Lord God shall give unto him SERM.
the throne of David his Father, and he shall reign XX.*
over the house of David for ever ; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Luke i. 32.
He is also a King by divine designation and appointment. For, *Let all Acts ii. 36.*
the house of Israel, saith St. Peter, know assuredly,
that God hath made him Lord and Christ ; and,
The Father hath given him authority to execute John v. 22,
judgment, because he is the Son of man (or as such).^{27.} Heb. i. 2.
He is also King by merit and purchase ; for, *he for*^{ii. 9.}
the suffering of death was crowned with glory and^{righteousness}
honour ; he was obedient to death, even the death^{Exaginatio.}
of the cross ; therefore God super-exalted him,
and bestowed on him a name above every name.
To this end he both died and rose again, that he Rom. xiv. 9.
might lord it over both the dead and living. He ^{was conqueror.}
is King also by conquest ; having delivered us out of Col. i. 13.
the power of darkness, and freed us from the vas-^{ii. 15.}
salage of sin ; having spoiled principalities and
powers, made a show of them openly, and triumphed over them ; having delivered us from our ene- Lake i. 71.
mies, and from the hand of all that hate us ; that^{34.} Tit. ii. 14.
we being delivered from our enemies, might serve Rom. vi. 22.
him without fear, in holiness and righteousness John viii.^{36.}
before him all the days of our life. He is also a King by our election and free choice, we having Matt. xi.
voluntarily put ourselves under his protection, and^{29.}
submitted to his command, and taken upon ourselves his yoke, and vowed everlasting fealty to him in our baptism. Such a right he hath of governing.

As for the extent of his kingdom, it is in all respects boundless, both for place and time ; it is universal and perpetual. He is the eternal King of all the world : God hath so exalted him and given him Phil. iii. 8.

SERM. *a name above all names, that to the name of Jesus*
 XX. *every knee should bend, whether of things in heaven, or things upon earth, or things under the*
Rev. v. 13. xix. 16. i. 5. xvii. 12. *earth. To him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, by every creature in heaven, and in the*
earth, and under the earth, are jointly to be ascribed the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and
Eph. i. 21. Col. ii. 10. 1 Tim. vi. ἡτεράνω πάσας ἀρχῆς, above all rule, and authority,
15. Mat. xxviii. 18. xi. 27. John iii. 35. xiii. 3. xvii. 2. Eph. i. 22. Acts xx. 28. *and domination, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come: it is his just title and proper badge, *The King of kings, and Lord of lords*; to whom all nations are vassals, yea all creatures are subject and tributary.*
 But he in especial manner is King over his church; that *peculiar people*, whom he hath especially purchased to himself by his merits and blood; whom he hath subdued to his obedience by the sword of his word, and by the prevailing virtue of his Spirit;
Ps. cxxxii. 13. Rev. iii. 12. 21. Heb. xii. 22. Gal. iv. 26. Eph. ii. 19. i. 22. that mystical Zion, in which it is said that God will place his reign and residence for ever; that *heavenly city*, whereof all the saints are *fellow-citizens*, and he the sovereign Head and Governor; God hath, saith St. Paul, put all things under his feet, and hath given him head above all things to the church.
 In respect to which both the evangelical dispensation here, and the future state of bliss hereafter, are called *the kingdom of heaven*. Over this he reigns, enjoying all royal prerogatives, exercising all royal administrations, and dispensing most royal munificences. He hath in this his kingdom established most righteous and wholesome laws; the which his subjects are by him obliged and enabled to obey. He constantly defendeth and protecteth

his subjects from all invasions and assaults of their SERM.
enemies, (intestine enemies, their own lusts; external enemies, the Devil and the world.) He provides for all their needs and wants; he supports them in all their distresses and troubles. He exercises judgment over them; distributing fit rewards and punishments with exquisite justice and equity; (most liberal rewards to the loyal and obedient; most severe punishments upon obstinate offenders and rebels.) He ^{Col. ii. 15.} lastly restrains and suppresses, defeats and destroys, all the adversaries to his royal dignity, and to the welfare of his good subjects, both visible and invisible, temporal and spiritual. *Out of his mouth* (as it is in Rev. xix. the Apocalypse) *there goeth a sharp sword, that* ^{15.} *Psal. ii. 9.* *with it he should smite the nations; and he shall* ^{Matt. xxv. 31.} *rule them with a rod of iron. These mine enemies,* ^{Luke xix. 27.} *(he shall one day say,) which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me. He must reign,* saith St. Paul, ^{1 Cor. xv. 25.} *till he hath put all enemies under his feet.* Thus is he a King, endued with sovereign right and power, crowned with glorious majesty, enjoying all preemnences, and exercising all acts suitable to regal dignity.

3. He is likewise a *Priest*, and that much above an ordinary one; διαφορωτέρας τέτευχε λειτουργίας. *He* ^{λειτουργίας} _{τέτευχε} *hath obtained a more excellent function* (as the apostle to the Hebrews speaketh) than ever any other priest had. *Every high priest*, saith the apostle to the Hebrews, *is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices.* He did, as such, once offer up an oblation, in worth and excellency far surpassing all the sacrifices and oblations that ever were made; (all ^{1 Pet. i. 18.} _{Heb. ix. 9.} the fattest hecatombs that ever were sacrificed, all

SERM. the gold and precious stones that ever were dedicated,
XX. all the spices and perfumes that ever were kindled into incense, upon altar, were but vile and sordid, were ineffectual and unacceptable, in comparison thereto;) a willing oblation he made upon the

^{Heb. vii. 26.} altar of his cross of himself, (his most innocent, most
^{27. x. 10, 5.} pure, most spotless and unblemished self,) of his
^{ix. 12.} Eph. v. 2.
^{John x. 16.} most glorious body, (the temple of the Divinity,) of
^{vi. 51.} ^{1 John ii. 2.} his most precious blood, of his dear life, *for the life of the world* and redemption of mankind; for the *propitiation of our sins and the sins of the whole world*; an oblation which alone could appease God's wrath, and satisfy his justice, and merit his favour toward us.

^{1 John ii. 1.} He doth also (which is another sacerdotal per-
^{Tim. ii. 5.} formance) *intercede for us*; he intercedes as an ad-
^{John xiv.} ^{13. xv. 16.} vocate for the pardon of our sins; (*If any man sin,*
^{xvi. 23, 24.} ^{Eph. v. 20.} *we have an advocate with (or to) the Father, Jesus*
^{Heb. v. 7.} *Christ the righteous.* He intercedes for the accept-
 ance of our services, (whence we are enjoined to *do all things, to pray, to give thanks in his name;*) for the *granting our requests; for grace and as-*

^{Eph. i. 3, 6.} *sistance; for comfort and reward; for all spiritual blessings* and advantages to be conferred upon us; he thus pursuing the work of salvation by his propitiatory sacrifice begun for us; whence, as the apostle to the Hebrews saith, *he is able to save to the uttermost those that by him come to God, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.*

^{1 Chron. xxiii. 13.} He doth also perform the priestly function of
^{Lev. ix. 22.} *blessing.* Blessing the people in God's name, and
^{23.} ^{Numb. vi.} blessing God in the people's behalf; as did that il-
^{23.} ^{Gen. xiv. 19, 20.} lustrious type of his, Melchizedek; (*Blessed, said he, be Abraham of the most high God, possessor*

of heaven and earth ; and blessed be the most high SERM.
God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy XX.
hand.) So hath Jesus effectually pronounced all
joy and happiness to his faithful people ; he pro-
nounced blessedness to them in his sermons ; he <sup>Matt. v. 1.
&c.</sup>
blessed his disciples at his parting ; *Lifting up his* <sup>Luke xxiv.
50.</sup>
hands, he blessed them, saith St. Luke ; *God in him,* ^{Eph. i. 3.}
saith St. Paul, *hath blessed us with all spiritual*
blessings in heavenly places, (or in heavenly things ;)
and, *God,* saith St. Peter, *having raised up his son* ^{Acts iii. 26.}
Jesus, sent him to bless us in turning every one of
us from his iniquity : and at the last day he will
utter that comfortable benediction ; *Come, ye blessed* <sup>Matt. xxv.
34.</sup>
of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for
you from the foundation of the world. So is Jesus
a true and perfect *Priest.* And,

So, finally, in all respects, is *Jesus God's anointed*, and *the Christ of God* ; as the great *Prophet* and Doctor ; as the *Sovereign King* and *Prince* ; as the *High Priest* and *Advocate* of his church. And indeed that he is so is the fundamental point of our religion ; which the apostles did peculiarly testify, preach, and persuade ; the sincere belief of which doth constitute and denominate us *Christians.*

IV. The consideration whereof ought to beget in us a practice answerable to the relations between him and us ; grounded thereupon.

If Jesus be such a *Prophet*, we must, with care- <sup>Heb. ii. 1,
&c.</sup>
ful attention, and a docile mind, hearken to his ad-
monitions and instructions ; we must yield a steady
belief to all his doctrine, and we must adhere con-
stantly thereto, and we must readily obey and prac-
tise what he teaches.

SERM. If he be a *King*, we must maintain our due allegiance to him, pay him honour and reverence, submit to his laws and commandments, repose trust and confidence in him, fly to his protection and assistance in all our difficulties and needs.

If he be a *Priest*, we must with sincere faith and hope apply ourselves unto him for, and rely upon, his spiritual ministries in our behalf; sue for and expect propitiation of our sins by virtue of his sacrifice; the collation of all spiritual gifts from his intercession; all comfort, joy, and felicity in consequence of his effectual benediction. *Having*, (so the apostle to the Hebrews admonisheth us,) *a great Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.*

In short, if *Jesus* be *Christ*, let us be *Christians*; Christians, not only in name, in outward profession, in speculation and opinion, but in very deed and reality, in our heart and affection, in all our conversation and practice. *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ* (that is, who confesseth Jesus to be Christ, and himself to be his follower) *depart from iniquity.*

^{2 Tim. ii.}
^{19.} *Now the God of peace, that brought from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

His only Son, &c.

S E R M O N XXI.

JOHN i. 14.

*And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten
of the Father.*

THAT Jesus Christ our Lord is the *μονογενής*, SERM.
the only Son of God, that is, the Son of God in a XXI.
peculiar and high manner, otherwise far than any ^{John i. 18.}
creature can be so termed, St. John doth here (^{iii. 16, 18.} and ^{John iv. 9.}
in several other places) suppose, or assert plainly;
and it is a great point of the Christian doctrine, a
special object of our faith. To shew the truth of
which, to explain how it is to be understood, and to
apply the consideration thereof to our practice, shall
be the subject and scope of our present discourse.

I. That the Messias, designed by God to come
into the world for the restoring and reconciling
mankind unto God, was in an especial manner to
be the Son of God, even the ancient prophets did
foretell and presignify; *Thou art my Son, this day* ^{Ps. ii. 7.}
have I begotten thee, saith God of him in the se- ^{Heb. i. 5.}
cond Psalm. And of him, that which in the first ^{Acts xiii. 33.}
less perfect sense was spoken to king Solomon,
(who as the son and heir of David, as the builder
of God's house, as a prince of peace, reigning in
great glory, wealth, and prosperity; as endued with

SERM. incomparable wisdom, did most signally represent
 XXI. and prefigure him,) was chiefly intended for him,
 1 Chron. xxii. 10.
 xxviii. 6. and did more exactly agree to him; *He shall be
 my son, and I will be his Father; and I will
 establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel*
 2 Sam. vii. 13.
 Ps. lxxxix. *for ever: and again; He shall cry unto me, Thou
 art my father, my God, and the rock of my sal-
 vation: Also I will make him my firstborn, higher
 than the kings of the earth.* And accordingly it
 was, even before our Saviour's appearance, a per-
 suasion commonly passing among the Jews, (both
 learned and unlearned,) that the Messias should
 be the Son of God; as may be collected from se-
 veral passages in the New Testament; in which
 being *the Christ* and being *the Son of God* are
 conjoined as inseparable adjuncts, whereof one did
 imply the other, according to the sense then cur-
 rent, and previous to the embracing our Lord's doc-
 trine. For Nathanael, we see, was no sooner per-
 suaded that Jesus was the Christ, but he (according
 to his anticipation, common to the people) confess-
 John i. 49. *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; Rabbi,
 thou art the King of Israel.* Martha in like man-
 ner being moved to declare her faith concerning
 John xi. 27. *Jesus, expresseth it thus; Yea, Lord, I believe
 that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which
 should come into the world:* and likewise doth St.
 Peter, in the name of all his brethren, the apostles;
 John vi. 69. *We have believed, and have known, that thou art
 the Christ, the Son of the living God.* St. John the
 Matt. xvi. 16. Baptist also doth thus express his belief and yield
 John i. 34. *his testimony concerning Jesus; And I said, and
 bare record, that this is the Son of God.* Yea even
 the high priest himself implied the same, when ex-

amining our Lord he said, *Art thou the Christ, the SERM.
Son of the Blessed? I adjure thee by the living XXI.
God, tell us, whether thou be the Christ, the Son of* ^{Mark xvi.}
God: supposing that to be the Christ and to be ^{16.} *Matt. xxvi.*
the Son of God would concur in the same person. ^{63.}

Yea, the devils themselves had learned this, who
cried out, *What have we to do with thee, Jesus,* ^{29.} *Matt. viii.*
thou Son of God? ^{29.} *Mark i. 24.* ^{29.} *Luke iv. 41.* ^{34.}

Thus did the ancient scriptures intimate, and thus were God's people generally persuaded about the Messias; and that he is indeed the Son of God, the evangelical scripture doth every where teach us, calling him not only at large *the Son of God*, but more emphatically the ἀγαπητὸς, (*the darling Son of* ^{Matt. iii. 17.} *God*;) the νιὸς τῆς ἀγάπης, *Son of God's love*; the ^{xii. 18. xvii.} _{5.} νιὸς ἀληθινὸς, *God's true Son*, (that is, such most properly, in a most excellent manner incomparably representing and resembling God;) the ἴδιος νιὸς, (*God's* ^{Eph. i. 6.} *proper*, or peculiar *Son*;) the πρωτότοκος, *God's first-born*; ^{Col. i. 13.} *God's* ^{Rom. viii.} *only begotten Son*: all ^{32.} *John v. 18.* which epithets import somewhat of peculiar ^{1 Joh. v. 20} ^{Col. i. 15.} *eminen-* ^{Heb. i. 6.} *cy in the kind and ground of this his relation* ^{1 Joh. v. 20} *unto God.* The relation itself in a large sense, and equivocally, is attributed to several: Adam is called *the son of God*; and the angels are usually entitled ^{Luk. iii. ult.} such; and princes are styled *the children of the* ^{Pa. lxxxii.} *Most High*; and *all men* are said to be *God's off-* ^{6.} *spring*, and *good men* are especially dignified with ^{29.} *God's people*, as such, (the Israelites of old, and Christians now,) are *the children of* ^{Matt. v. 45.} *God*; yea, God is the *Father of all things*, as the maker and preserver of them: but all these, in comparison to Christ, are such in a manner very inferior, ^{εἰσὶν ἡμεῖς λαίγας.} and in a very improper sense; for he is the *only* ^{37.} *Naz. Orat.*

SERM. *Son of God*: which denotes a relation in its kind
 XXI. singular and incomparable; from which all other things are excluded.

Now that we may discern the difference, let us consider the grounds and respects upon which this relation of our Saviour to God is built, or the reasons why he is called the Son of God: there are several expressed or implied in scripture.

1. Christ is called *the Son of God* in regard to his *temporal generation*, as being in a manner extraordinary conceived in the *Blessed Virgin by the Holy*

Luke i. 35. *Tὸ γενόμενον ἐν ἀγαγμῷ.*
Ghost; so the angel expressly telleth us: *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee*; therefore also that *holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God*: so the apostle also; *When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son*

Luke i. 32. *He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and God shall give him the throne of his father David.* *Diles iste quem tantum extremum reformidas, aeterni us. talis est.*
Sen. Epist. 102. *Luke xx. 35, 36.*
γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικὸς—γενόμενον in some copies:) a generation so peculiar and wonderful, without intervention of any father but God himself, is one ground of this relation and title; he therein excelling the common sort of men.

2. Christ also may be termed *the Son of God* in regard to his *resurrection* by divine efficacy; that being a kind of *generation*, or introduction into another state of life immortal. Others are upon this ground called the sons of God; *They, saith our Saviour, who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead—can die no more; for they are equal to the angels, and are the children of God, (νἱοί εἰσι τοῦ Θεοῦ,) being sons of the resurrection.* How much more then may he be thence so named, who is *the firstfruits of them*

1 Cor. xv. 20, 23.

that sleep, and the firstborn from the dead ? especially since that of the Psalmist, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee, was (according to St. Paul's exposition) verified in the raising him. In this respect Christ also did much excel all others, who upon the same ground are called the sons of God.

SERM.
XXI.

Col. i. 18.

Rev. i. 5.

In Acta xxvi.

23. iii. 15.

xiii. 32, 33.

3. Christ is capable of this title by reason of that *high office*, in which by God's especial designation he was instated. If ordinary princes and judges (as being deputed by God to represent himself in the dispensation of justice, or as resembling God in the exercise of their power and authority) have been called *the children of the Most High*, in the language of holy scripture ; with how much greater truth and reason may he be called so, who was most signally consecrated and commissionated to the most eminent function that ever was or could be ; who did whatever he did in God's name, who represented and resembled God so exactly ? It is his own argumentation and inference ; *If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken ; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God ?* That extraordinary *sanctification* and *mission* did render him worthy and capable of that appellation, far beyond all others, who have for the like reason obtained it.

Ps. lxxxii.

6. xxix. 1.

4. Whereas also it is said, that God did appoint, or constitute our Saviour heir of all things ; did give him head above all things to the church, and did put all things under his feet ; did give him power over all flesh ; did commit unto him all au-

Heb. i.

Eph. i. 22.

John xvii.

Matt. 2.

xxviii. 18.

xi. 27.

SERM. *uthority in heaven and earth*; did *exalt him to the highest place of dignity and authority next to himself, at the right hand of the Majesty in the highest; yea did place him upon his own throne and tribunal in his room, so that the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son;* well may he in that respect be entitled the *Son of God*; as thereby holding the rank and privilege suitable to such a relation; he being the *Chief of the family, and next in order to the great Paterfamilias of heaven and earth. Of him, saith St. Paul, all the family in heaven and earth is named: Moses verily, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, was faithful in all his house as a servant, but Christ as a Son over his own house: and, Being made so much better than the angels, saith the same apostle, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they, (they being only called servants, or ministers; he being entitled a Son and heir.)*

In these respects is our Saviour properly, or may be fitly, denominated the *Son of God*, with some peculiarity and excellency beyond others: but his being with such emphasis called *God's only begotten Son*, (denoting an exclusion of all others from this relation upon the same kind of ground,) doth surely import a more excellent ground thereof, than any of these mentioned. For the *first Adam* did also immediately receive his being from the power and inspiration of God, (God formed his body and breathed a soul into it.) And Isaac, Samuel, and John the Baptist had also a generation extraordinary and miraculous, as being born of parents mortified by age and unapt for generation, by interposition of the divine power, (so it is expressly said of Sarah,

Ἄφ' ἣς οὐκεί ταῦτα θη-
σημινού.

12.

μη ἔλαβεν εἰς καταβολὴν σπέρματος, she received S E R M.
ever from God for conception of seed;) which XXI.
ductions do not so greatly differ from the produc-
of Christ as man.

And how can we conceive that the production of
els should be so much inferior to our Saviour's
poral generation, if there were no other but
t?

And although our Saviour was the first and chief,
was he not the only Son of the resurrection ;
ere were, as the Apostle to the Hebrews saith, ^{Heb. ii. 10.}
my sons of this kind brought to glory; and Christ ^{Rom. viii.}
firstborn among many brethren; this is also ^{29.}
round not proper or perspicuous enough for such
enomination; and indeed before it came to pass,
was called God's Son; he was so when he lived,
was so when *God so loved the world, that he*
gave him for its salvation.

Neither doth the free collation of power and dig- ^{John iii. 16,}
, how eminent soever, well suffice to ground this
gularity of relation; for we see others also in re-
d to their designation and deputation to offices
power and dignity, although indeed subordinate
inferior to those he received, to be entitled *the*
sons of God; and however this is rather the found-
on of a metaphorical, than of a natural and pro-
sonship, which is too slender and insufficient
him, who in the most solemn and august strain
enominated such.

Alike although our Saviour be the heir of all
igs, yet hath he co-heirs, whom *God hath*, as St. ^{Rom. viii.}
il speaketh, *together enlivened, and together* ^{17, 29.}
set, and together seated with him in thrones of ^{6.}
ey and bliss; beside that privileges of this kind

^{Heb. ii. 10.}

SERM. are rather *consecutive* and *declarative* of this his
 XXI. relation to God, than formally *constitutive* thereof:

Rom. viii. 17. *If a son, then an heir*, saith St. Paul; inheritance follows *sonship*, and declares it, rather than properly makes it.

Moreover those prerogatives of singular affection and favour appropriated to Christ, together with all those glorious preferments consequent on them, do also argue some higher ground of this relation: for how could it be, that merely upon account of that temporal generation, (which did only make him a man, *of like passions and infirmities to us, sin only excepted*,) or in respect to any thing consequent thereupon, God should affect him with so special a dearness, and advance him to dignities so superlative, *ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς, καὶ ἔχοντις, καὶ δυνάμεως, καὶ κυριότητος, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named; angels and authorities and powers being,* as St. Peter says, *made subject unto him?* Such proceedings (that generation only, or any thing resulting from it, being supposed) do not seem consistent with that decent congruity and natural equity, which God is ever wont to observe in his regard to persons and in his ordering of things.

We must therefore search for a more excellent and more proper ground of this magnificent relation, or peculiar *sonship*; and such an one we shall find clearly deducible from testimonies of holy scripture, (and by several steps of discourse we shall deduce it.)

1. It is thence first evident, that our Saviour had in him somewhat more than human, according to which he is said to have existed before his temporal generation here among men. Even as men after

death are in regard to a superviving part of them, SERM. their immortal soul, said to be and live; for, even ^{XXI.} then, saith our Lord, *all men do live to God.* For, ^{Luk. xx. 38.} before his birth here, he is said to have been in heaven, and to have descended thence; *No man,* ^{John iii. 13.} saith he, *hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven:* even when he visibly lived here, he was (as himself affirms) *secundum aliquid sui*, according to somewhat invisible in him, then actually in heaven; and according to that *somewhat* he was before in heaven; and by union of that invisible being to human visible nature, he is said to have descended from heaven. His ascension into heaven was but a translation of the human nature thither, where according to a more excellent nature he did abide before the incarnation; for, *What,* saith ^{John vi. 62.} he again, *if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?* from hence he is declared worthy and capable of so transcendent preferments; for, *He that cometh from above, out of heaven, is* ^{John iii. 31.} *above all things;* because, *The second man is the* ^{viii. 23.} *Lord from heaven.* He, as to his manifestation in ^{47.} the flesh, was junior to St. John the Baptist, but in truth was of more ancient standing, and thence was to be preferred before him, as St. John himself per- ^{John i. 15.} ceived and professed; *He that,* said St. John, *comes after me is preferred before me, because he was before me.* He did subsist even before Abraham was born, whence without absurdity he could affirm, that he and Abraham had interviews and intercourse together; so he discoursed with the Jews; *Thou* ^{John viii.} *art not, said they, yet fifty years old, and hast thou* ^{58.} *seen Abraham?* he replied; *Verily, verily, I say*

SERM. *unto you, Before Abraham was, I am :* this saying
 XXI. did seem very absurd to them, and so offended them,
 that they took up stones to cast at him ; not apprehend-
 ing the mystery couched in his words, and that
 he had another nature, different from that which
 appeared to them, according to which that saying
 of his was verified. Yea further he had a subsist-
 ence and a glory before the world had a being ; for
 John xvii. thus he prays ; *And now, Father, glorify me with*
 5. *thine own self with the glory which I had with*
thee before the world was ; glory (that is, a most
 honourable state of being, and excellent perfection)
 was not only destinated to him, but he really had
 it, and enjoyed it with God, before the world was.

2. Necessary indeed it was, that he should exist
 before the world, for that, secondly, God by him
 made the world, and for that he made the world
 Eph. iii. 9. himself : *God, saith St. Paul, created all things by*
Jesus Christ ; and, *By him, saith the Apostle to the*
Hebrews, God made the worlds ; (or the ages, *τοὺς*
αιῶνας, that is, all things which ever at any time did
 Heb. xi. 2. subsist ; those very ages, which the same apostle
 John i. 3. saith *we believe to have been framed by the word*
of God.) By him, saith St. John in the beginning
of his Gospel, were all things made, and without
him was nothing made that was made ; δι' αὐτοῦ,
 Col. i. 16. *that is, by him, not δι' αὐτὸν, for him only :* to exclude
that ungrammatical misinterpretation, St. Paul join-
eth both those notions together ; τὰ πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ, καὶ
εἰς αὐτὸν ἐκπισταὶ, All things, saith he, were made by
him, and for him : as also to prevent any restriction
 or exception of matters created by him, he particu-
 larly reckoneth what things were made by him ; *By*
him, saith St. Paul, were all things created, that are

in heaven and that are in earth ; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, SERM.
all things were created by him, and for him : he XXI.
 was not only (as some heterodox interpreters would expound it) to create a new moral and figurative world ; he should not only restore and reform mankind, but he of old did truly and properly give being to all things ; and among those things, he even created angels, *all things in heaven* ; beings unto which that metaphorical creation of men here doth not extend or anywise appertain : he therefore consequently, as St. Paul subjoins, ἐστὶ πρὸ πάντων, *doth exist before all things* ; as the cause must necessarily in nature precede the effect.

3. He did indeed (to ascend yet higher, even to the top) exist from all eternity : for he is called absolutely ἀρχὴ, *the beginning*, which excludes all time previous to his existence ; he is styled πρωτόκος πάσης, ^{Col. i. 18.} ^{Rev. iii. 14.} ^{Col. i. 15.} *κτίσεως*, *the firstborn of every creature* ; (or rather born before all the creation, as πρῶτος μον ἦν signifies, *he was before me*, in St. John.) He is *the Word*, ^{John i. 30.} ^{i. 1.} which was *in the beginning* ; that is, before any time conceivable, and consequently from eternity. He is called *the eternal life* ; *The life* (saith St. John i. 2. John in his first Epistle ; *the life*, that is, another ^{John i. 4.} ^{xii. 25. xiv.} name, frequently attributed to Christ, especially by ^{6.} ^{1 John i. 2.} that apostle ; *the life*) *was manifested, and we did see it ; and we bear witness, and shew that eternal life, which was with the Father*, (ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν, *the Word was with God* ; and ἡ ζωὴ ἦν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, *the life was with the Father*, are, as I conceive, the same thing :) and more explicitly in the same Epistle ; *We are, saith St. John, in him that is true, in his Son Jesus Christ* ; *he* ^{v. 11, 12.} ^{20.} ^{John v.}

SERM. *is the true God, and the eternal life.* Hence is
 XXI. he frequently in the Apocalypse styled *the first*
 Rev. i. 11, *and the last, the beginning and the end, Alpha*
 17. ii. 8,
and Omega; he that was, and is, and is to come;
 21. vi. 22,
^{13.} which phrases do commonly express the eternity
 Isa. xliv. 6, *and immortality proper to God; as in that of Isaiah;*
 xli. 4
Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and
I am the last, and beside me there is no God. The
 same is signified by that elegy of the Apostle to the
 Heb. xiii. 8. Hebrews; *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to*
day, and for ever, (that is, who is eternally immu-
table;) that apostle also implies the same, when he
 saith, that Melchizedek represented and resembled
 the Son of God, as having μήτε ἀρχὴν ἡμερῶν, μήτε τέλος;
 Heb. vii. 3. τέλος, *neither beginning of days nor end of life;*
 Melchizedek in a typical or mystical way, our Lord
 in a real and proper sense was such; beginningless
 and endless in his existence. And the prophet
 Micah seems to have taught the same, saying of
 him, (of him that should come out of Bethlehem, to
 be ruler in Israel,) that *his goings forth have been*
 Mic. v. 2. *from old, even from everlasting;* (or, from the days
 of eternity.) His eternity is however necessarily
 deducible from that, which is by St. John, St. Paul,
 and the Apostle to the Hebrews so plainly affirmed
 of him, that he made the world, that he made the
 ages, that he made *all things;* for if he made the
 world, he was before the foundations of the world,
 which phrase denotes eternity; if he made the ages,
 he must be before all ages; if all things were made
 by him, and nothing can make itself, then necessarily
 he was unmade; and being unmade, he necessarily
 must be eternal; for what at any time did not exist,

can never without being made come to exist. His SERM.
eternity also may be strongly inferred from his being _____
called the *word*, the *wisdom*, and the *power* of God; 1 Cor. i. 24.
for if he were not eternal, ἦν ἄπειρος καιρὸς, ὅτε χωρὶς τούτων In secret.
In secret. Conc. Nic. ^{Conc. Nic.} ἤ δὲ Θεός, there was a time when God wanted these; pag. 276.
when he was without mental speech, or understanding;
when he was not wise, when he was not powerful;
as St. Athanasius argues. It therefore doth
with sufficient evidence appear from scripture, that
our Saviour had a being before his temporal birth,
and that before all creatures, yea even from eternity.
Furthermore,

4. From what hath been said, it follows, that his
being was absolutely divine. If he was no creature,
if author of all creatures, if eternally subsistent, then
assuredly he is God; that state, that action, that
property are incommunicably peculiar unto God.
Only God is ὁ ὢν, *being of himself* originally and in-
dependently; only God is the *creator of all things*,
(*He that made all things is God*, saith the Apostle Heb. iii. 4.
to the Hebrews;) only God hath *immortality*, (or 1 Tim. vi.
eternity,) saith St. Paul; no epithet or attribute is
more proper to God, than that, αἰώνιος Θεός, God Rom. xvi.
^{26.} *eternal*. Hence is our Lord said by St. Paul, be-
fore he did assume the form of a servant, and be-
came like unto men, to have *subsisted in the form* Phil. ii. 6,
of God, not deeming it robbery to be equal to God*, ?
(or to have a subsistence in duration and perfection
equal to God;) so that as he was after his incarna-
tion truly man, partaker of human nature, affections,
and properties; so before it he was truly God, par-
taking the divine essence and attributes. Thence
is he often in the scriptures absolutely and directly
named God; God in the most proper and most high

SER M. sense; *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,*

XXI. *John i. 1.* saith St. John in the beginning of his Gospel, (the place where he is most likely to speak with the least ambiguity or darkness;) the same Word, which was in time *made flesh, and dwelt among us*, did before

i Tim. iii. 16. all time exist with God, and was God. *God*, saith St. Paul, *was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed upon in the world, assumed up into glory*: of which propositions it is evident that Christ is the subject, and by consequence he is there named God. God is also by St. Paul said to have

Acts xx. 28. *purchased the church with his own blood*; who did that, but he that also was man, even *the man Christ Jesus?* St. Thomas upon his conviction of our Saviour's resurrection did express his faith upon him

John xx. 28. Συγχαρεῖ λέγων, καὶ μελλον, ἀποδιχίσαι, μὴ πολὺν αὐτὸν. Athan. Orat. 3. contra Ar. p. 394. Tit. ii. 13. Heb. ii. 8. 1 John v. 20. by crying out, *My Lord and my God*; which acknowledgment our Saviour accepted and approved as a proper testimony of that faith; (*He permits him to say it, or rather he accepts it, not hindering him*, saith St. Athanasius.) St. Paul calls the coming of our Lord at the resurrection, *the appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* To the Son (as the Apostle to the Hebrews interpreteth it) it was said in the Psalm, (Psal. xlvi. 7.)

Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. We are, saith St. John, *in the true one, in his son Jesus Christ; this he (οὗτος) is the true God, and life eternal;* no false, no metaphorical, no temporary God, but the very true God, the supreme eternal God. *Out of whom, (saith St. Paul, recounting the privileges of the Jewish nation,) as concerning the*

*flesh, (or according to his humanity,) Christ came, SERM.
who is over all, God blessed for ever; ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων XXI.*
Θεὸς, the God over all; the sovereign God and Lord ^{Mark xiv.}
of all things^{}; the Most High; God blessed for* ^{61.}
ever; the ὁ εὐλογητός, which is a characteristical title ^{Rom. i. 25.}
or special attribute of God in the style of the scrip- ^{2 Cor. xi.}
tures, and according to the common use of the Jews.
Yea even of old, Isaiah foretold of the child which
should be born, of the son which should be given
to us, that his name should be called (that is, ac-
cording to the Hebrew manner of speaking, that he
should really be, or however that he truly should be
called) the Mighty God, the everlasting Father,
the Prince of Peace.

In these places more clearly and immediately, in ^{Vid. 1 John}
many other places obliquely and according to fair ^{iii. 16.}
consequence, in many more probably, our Saviour is ^{Gal. i. 1, 12.}
called God, God absolutely without any interpreta- ^{Jude 4.}
^{Isa. xxxv.}
tive restriction or diminution. And seeing the holy
scripture is so careful of yielding occasion to con-
ceive more Gods than one; seeing it is so strict in
exacting the belief, worship, and obedience of one
only God, absolutely such; may we not well infer
with St. Irenæus, Now (saith he, speaking indeed
concerning the God of the Old Testament, whom
the Gnostics did not acknowledge to be the highest
and best God, but in words applicable to the God
of the New Testament, whom we adore; Now, saith
he) *neither the Lord, nor the Holy Ghost, nor the*
apostles would ever have called any one definitively,

* Utrosque Dei appellatione significavit Spiritus et eum qui ungitur Filium, et eum qui ungit, id est Patrem. *Iren. iii. 6.*

Rev. v. 13. πᾶν κτίσμα, (where by the way seeing all creatures worship him, he is excluded from being a creature.)

SER.M. nor absolutely God, unless he were truly God : and,
 XXI. Never, saith he again, did the prophets or the apostles name any other God, or call Lord, beside the true and only God^b.

That he is truly God, we might also from other appellations peculiar to God ; from divinest attributes and divinest operations ascribed to him ; from the worship and honour we are allowed and enjoined to yield him, further shew ; but these things (in compliance with the time and your patience) I shall omit.

Other appellations also peculiar unto the supreme God are assigned to him, as that most appropriate and incommunicable name *Jehovah*; (of which in Isa. xliv. 6, the prophet Isaiah God himself says thus; *I am the Lord, and there is none else*: and Moses; *Jehovah our God is one Jehovah*: even this is attributed to Deut. vi. 4. him; for, *This, saith Jeremiah, is his name, whereby he shall be called, Jehovah our righteousness*: and of St. John the Baptist it was by Malachi foretold, Mal. iii. 1. that he should *prepare the way of Jehovah*. The Matt. iii. 3. name *Lord* (answering to Jehovah) is both absolutely and with most excellent adjuncts commonly given him; *The second man*, saith St. Paul, *is the Lord from heaven*; the *Lord of all things* he is called by the same apostle; and, *the one, or only Lord*: *To us, saith he, there is one Lord, by whom are all things*: and, *the Lord of glory*, or most glo-

^b Neque igitur Dominus, neque Spiritus Sanctus, neque Apostoli eum, qui non esset Deus, definitive et absolute Deum nominassent, nisi esset verus Deus. *Iren.* iii. 6.

Nunquam prophetæ, neque apostoli alium Deum nominaverunt, vel Dominum appellaverunt, præter verum, et solum Deum. *Idem*, lib. iii. cap. 8.

rious Lord ; (*If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory:*) and, *The Lord of lords, and King of kings*, he is called in St. John's Revelation, (*They shall, saith he, war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings:*) we are also by precept enjoined, and by exemplary practice authorized, to render unto our Saviour that honour and worship, which are proper and due to the only supreme God ; for, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*, is the great law of true religion : **It is only belonging to God, as St. Athanasius speaks, to be worshipped; a creature must not worship a creature, but a servant his Lord, and a creature its God.* And, †*They who call a creature Lord, and worship him as a creature, how, saith he, do they differ from the heathen?* But of him it is said, *Let all the angels of God worship him;* of him myriads of angels say, †*Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing: yea all creatures in heaven and earth, and under the earth, resound the same acclamation, saying: To him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the worship, and the praise for ever.* Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood—to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Hence the throne of God the Father and of his Son are one and the same ; *The throne of God, and of the Lamb, are in it*, saith St. John, speaking of the heavenly city; *For the Son, saith that great father, reigning with the same royalty of his Father, is*

Rev. xxii. 3. τόν τε γάρ τού πατέρος βασιλίαν, ἡ μὲν τε τὸν

SERM. seated upon the same throne with his Father. To

XXI. invoke the name of our Lord Jesus Christ is a

*ab*ριν δινεν*
τοῦ οντος
καθηρινού.*
Ath. Or.
ii. in Ar.
1 Cor. i. 2.

practice characterizing and distinguishing Christians from infidels; as when St. Paul inscribes his Epistle

to the church of Corinth, *together with all that call*

upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every

Acts ix. 14, *place; and when Saul is said to have authority from*

21. Rom. x. 12. the chief priests to bind all that called upon his

13. 14. 2 Tim. ii. name, so that we need not to allege the single exam-

22. ple of St. Stephen invoking our Lord. Indeed himself

John v. 23, informs us, that the Father had committed all judg-

24. 2 John iii. ment unto the Son, that all men should honour the

Son, even as they honour the Father. To wish and

Rom. i. 7. pray for grace and peace from our Lord Jesus

1 Cor. xiii. Christ is the usual practice of the apostles, and to

2 Thess. ii. 16. dispense them is a prerogative of his, common to

1 Thess. iii. 12. him with God his Father. To have the same Holy

Tit. iii. 6. Spirit as the Father unmeasurably, and to send it

from himself, with commissions and instructions, and

to communicate it freely, are especial characters of

supreme divinity, and much transcending any crea-

τι θημείται τούτη σύνεσις δόθενται τῷ οντοποιεῖσθαι τὸν πνεῦμαν, σὺν αὐτοῖς παραχωρεῖσθαι, σὺν τῷ πνεύματι παραχωρεῖσθαι, ἀλλὰ τοῦτο μόνον τὸν πνεῦμαν.

Ath. Orat. iii. in Ar. p. 388.

Jer. xvii. 5. John xiv. 1.

Whereas also we are often severely prohibited from

relying or confiding upon any man, or any creature,

*(as in that of the prophet; *Cursed be the man, that**

trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm;) we

are yet allowed, yea we are obliged, to repose our

*trust and confidence in Christ; *Ye trust in God,**

saith he himself to his disciples, trust also in me;

*whence St. Paul calleth him emphatically *our hope,**

*Col. i. 27. in his compellation to Timothy; *Paul an apostle of**

1 Tim. i. 1. Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Sa-

saviour, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope; which SERM. is the same title that Jeremiah attributes unto God; XXI.
O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble. Hence to him, jointly with God the Father, and the divine Spirit, that solemn benediction or prayer is directed ; *The grace of our Lord Jesus* 2 Cor. xiii.
Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, ^{13.} *be with you all;* as also a parity of highest adoration is then together with the same divine persons yielded to him, when we are baptized in his name, and consecrated to his service.

The divinest attributes of God are also in the most absolute manner and perfect degree assigned to him : eternity, as we discoursed before. Immense-John iii. 13.ity of presence and power, then implied, when speaking with the Jews he told them that he was then in heaven ; and when he promises his disciples, that *he will be with them, whenever they meet in his name* ; and also, that *he will be with them, to the end of the world.* Infinite wisdom and knowledge ; *for in him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge* ; and, *Now are we sure, say the disciples to him in St. John, that thou knowest all things* : and, *Lord, saith St. Peter, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee* : and St. Paul calls him *the wisdom of God, and the power of God* : wherefore since God's wisdom is omniscient, and his power omnipotent, so consequently is he. In short, whatever attribute or perfection God hath, the same hath he ; for, *All things, saith he, that the Father hath, are mine.* What creature without high presumption could say those words concerning the divine Spirit ; *He shall glorify me,* John xvi. 14.

SERM. for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto
 XXI. you.

The divine attributes he expresseth by divinest operations and works, which are ascribed to him. It is a most divine work to create; this we shewed before to have been performed by him: to sustain, and conserve things in being, is another like work; Heb. i. 3. this he doth; *For he, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, upholdeſt all things by the word of his power;* and, *By him, saith St. Paul, all things consist.* To perform miracles, or do things surmounting the laws and thwarting the course of nature; such as by mere word and will rebuking winds and seas, curing diseases, ejecting devils, is the property Ps. lxxiii. 18. of him, who, as the Psalmist says, *alone doeth great lxxxvi. 8, wonders.* Particularly to raise the dead is a prerogative reserved by God in his own hand; (for, *The 4. 1 Sam. ii. 6 Deut. xxxii. 39. Lord killeth, and the Lord maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.*) This our Lord often did at his pleasure; for, *As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will:* Rev. i. 18. and of himself he saith in the Apocalypse; *I have the keys of hell and of death.* Especially to raise John x. 17. himself, which he assumeth to himself; (*I, saith he, 18. lay down my life, that I may take it up again; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to* John ii. 19. *take it up again:* and, *Demolish this temple,* saith he again, *and in three days I will rear it;* which it was impossible for him to do, and unintelligible how it should be done, otherwise than by the divinity resident in him. To be καρδιογνώστης, searching men's hearts and discerning their secret thoughts,

is a peculiar work of him that saith, *I the Lord try* SERM.
the heart, I search the reins; and of our Lord it is XXI.
said, *He needed not that any should witness about* ^{Jer. vii. 10.}
a man, for he knew what was in man; and by ^{John ii. 25.}
many experiments he declared this power. To fore-
see and foretell future contingencies to be peculiar
to himself God signified, when in the prophet he
thus challenged the objects of heathen worship:
Show the things to come, that we may know ye are ^{Isa. xli. 23.}
gods; this our Lord did upon several occasions,
particularly in the case of Judas's treason; *He* ^{John vi. 64.}
knew, saith St. John, from the beginning, who they
were who did not believe, and who it was that
should betray him. This, I say, he did, not as the
prophets, by particular arbitrary revelation, but im-
mediately by his own Spirit; whereby even the pro-
phets themselves were illustrated and inspired; for
it was, as St. Peter says, *The Spirit of Christ in* ^{1 Pet. i. 11.}
them which testified beforehand the sufferings of
Christ, and the glories that should follow. To see
and know God, (*who inhabits inaccessible light*) is ^{1 Tim. vi.}
beyond a creature's capacity and state, and yet be- ^{16.}
longs to him; *None, saith he, hath seen the Father,* ^{John vi. 46.}
save he which is of God; he hath seen the Father:
and, *None knoweth the Father, but the Son, and* ^{Matt. xi. 27.}
he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. To re-
mit sins absolutely he denied not to be the property
of God, when his adversaries thus objected it; *Who* ^{Mark ii. 7.}
can forgive sins, except God only? yet he assumed ^{Is. xliii. 25.}
it to himself, and asserted it by a miracle. To save
also God declared to be a peculiar work of his, when
he said it, and reiterated it in Isaiah and in Hosea:
I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour; ^{Isa. xliii. 11.}
which act yet, and which title, are no less proper to ^{xlv. 21.}
Hos. xiii. 4.

SERM. our Lord. In fine, briefly, he claims to himself at
XXI. once the performance of every divine work, when
John v. 19. he saith, *Whatsoever the Father doeth, that also
doeth the Son likewise.*

Now all this state and majesty, all these glorious titles, attributes, and works, can we imagine that he Deut. vi. 15. *whose name is jealous*, as it is in Exodus xxxiv. 14. and *who is jealous of his name*, as it is in Ezekiel xxxix. 25. who said it once and again in the prophet Isa. xliii. 8. *he will not give his glory to another*; Isa. xlvi. 11. can we conceive, I say, that he should communicate them, or should suffer them to be ascribed to any mere creature, how eminent soever in nature or worth, how dear soever upon any regard? for indeed the highest creature producible must be infinitely distant from him, infinitely inferior to him, infinitely base and mean in comparison to him, as to οὐδὲ διέλεγον δύνατον δένει, καὶ ταῦτα πελλάσσει, τίς οὐ τῷ κατόπιν εργάσισθε ταῦτα διενέσσει. any true perfection or dignity; nor therefore can any creature be in nature capable of such names, such characters, such prerogatives; nor can in any reason or justice accept or bear them. Our Saviour therefore, unto whom by divine allowance and injunction they are attributed, who willingly admits them, who clearly assumes them to himself, is truly God.

5. Now the whole tenor of our religion (according to dictates of scripture most frequent and obvious) asserting the unity of God; our Saviour therefore, being God, must of necessity partake the same individual essence with God his Father; and it must be certainly true, which he affirmeth concerning himself; *I and the Father are one*, (*ἐν ἕσπερν, are the same thing, or one in nature; not εἰς ἕσπερν, the same in person, or manner of subsistence;*) and what he again saith; *He that hath seen me hath seen the* John x. 30. Rev. xxi. 22. The

Father ; and, I am in the Father, and the Father SERM.
in me ; by the divine essence common to both. XXI.

Yet hath he not this essence from himself, but by communication ; for, *As the Father hath life in himself, so he hath given the Son to have life in himself.* And ὁ ἐν παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, he *that is*, or hath his essence, *from God*, is the periphrasis he gives of himself. He is not first in order, as an original, but is *the image of the invisible God*, (an image indeed most adequate and perfectly like, as having the very same nature and essence.) He is ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης, (*the effulgency of his Father's glory*,) and χαρακτήρ τῆς ἰκοστάσεως, *the character*, or exact impression, *of his substance*. He is the internal word, or mind of God, which resembles him, and yet is not different from him : he is the *life*, the *wisdom*, the *power* of God ; which terms denote the most intrinsic and perfect unity. So the apostles, by the most apposite comparisons that nature affords, strive to adumbrate the ineffable manner of that eternal communication of the divine nature from God the Father to our Saviour ; the which is that generation, whereupon the relation, about which we speak, is founded ; or, because of which our Lord is most truly and properly called, *the only begotten Son of God*. For, if to produce a like in any kind or degree, be to generate ; then to give a being without any dissimilitude or disparity is the most proper generation : our Saviour therefore hence truly is the Son of God the Father. And that he is so only, that no other beside him hath been ever thus begotten, is evident ; for that as no reason of ours could have informed us, that our Saviour himself was thus begotten, so no revelation hath shewed us that any other

Lord God
Almighty is
in its temple
and the
Lamb.

John v. 26.
vi. 46.

Col. i. 15.
2 Cor. iv. 4.
John xiv. 9.
Heb. i. 3.

SERM. hath been ; and we therefore cannot without extreme
XXI. temerity suppose it. We are sufficiently instructed
 that all other divine productions, together with the
 relations grounded on them, are different from this ;
 by creation things receive a being from God infinitely
 distant from, infinitely unequal and unlike to, the
 divine essence ; and that *filiation*, or sonship, which
 doth stand upon adoption and grace, is wholly in
 kind different from this. And the communication
 of the divine essence jointly from the Father and
 Son to the Holy Spirit, doth in manner (although the
 manner thereof be wholly incomprehensible to us) so
 differ from this, that in the holy scripture (the only
 guide of our conception, and of our speech in mat-
 ters of this nature, far surpassing our reason) it is
 never called generation ; and therefore we must not
 presume to think or call it so.

Ωνται οἵμιοι συμπορφοῦσι μετανοεῖσθαι χάρειν, τὸν δὲ αὐτούς πρέπει τὴν τῆς μοδονίας ἀναβαίνειν τὰς δικαίους.
 Cyril.
 Al.

But let so much suffice for explication of the
 point ; a point represented in scripture so consider-
 able, that the belief thereof (if it have that sincerity
 and that strength as to dispose our hearts to a due
 love and reverence of the Son of God, attended with,
 or attested to by, a faithful obedience to his laws)
 doth raise us also to the privilege of becoming the
 sons of God, and doth mystically unite us to him,
 and elevateth us above the world ; so doth St. John
 John i. 12. teach us ; *To as many*, saith he, *as received him*,
 (received him as the Son of God, or believed him to
 be so,) *to them gave he the power* (or the privilege)
 1 John iv. 15. *to become the sons of God* : and, *Whosoever*, saith
 he, *shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God*
 1 John v. 5. *dwellmeth in him, and he in God* : and, *Who*, saith
 he again, *is he that overcometh the world, but he*
that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God ? of so

great importance is the point. Of which I shall SERM.
only now further briefly propose some practical ap- XXI.
plications.

1. We may hence learn whence the performances and the sufferings of Christ become of so high worth and so great efficacy. *Wonder not*, saith St. Cyril the Catechist, *if the whole world was redeemed*: Μὴ θαυμάσθε εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἀλλαγῆσθαι τὸν οὐρανόν, οὐ γὰρ οὐδὲ τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλὰ τὸν οὐρανὸν, οὐδὲ τὸν οὐρανόν, οὐδὲ τὸν οὐρανόν, &c. *for it was not a bare man, but the only Son of God that died for it*. It is not so strange, that God's only Son's mediation should be so acceptable and so effectual with God; that the blood of God's dearest Son should be so precious in God's sight, that the intercession of one so near him should be so prevalent with him. What could God refuse to the Son of his love earnestly soliciting and suing in our behalf! what debts might not so rich a price discharge! what anger could not so noble a sacrifice appease! what justice could not so full a dispensation satisfy! *We were not*, St. Peter telleth us, *redeemed with corruptible things, with silver or gold*, (no; whole Indies of such stuff would not have been sufficient to ransom one soul;) *but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot*. It was not, as the Apostle to the Hebrews remarketh, by the *blood of goats and heifers*, that Heb. ix. 12. our sins were expiated, (no; whole hecatombs would 13., 14. x. 4., 8., 10. have nothing availed to that purpose;) but by the *blood of Christ, who by the eternal Spirit offered up himself spotless unto God*, (who as the eternal Son of God did offer himself a sacrifice not to be blamed or refused.) *It is*, as St. John saith, *the blood of Christ, the Son of God, which purgeth us from all sin*. And well indeed might a Person so infinitely noble, worthy, and excellent, be a sufficient ransom



SERM. for whole worlds of miserable offenders and captives.
 XXI.

Well might his voluntary undergoing such inconveniences and infirmities of life, his suffering so disgraceful and painful a death, countervail the deserved punishment of all mankind; well might his so humble, so free, so perfect submission to God's will infinitely please God, and render him propitious to

Ἐπιεικεῖς παρεύει τῷ αὐτοῦ σώματι τὸν θεόν, καὶ περιέλθει, καὶ περιέστηται τὸν σωτῆρα γίγνεται.
 Athan. ad Adelph. Rom.viii.3.

Well might, as St. Athanasius speaks, *the very appearing of such a Saviour in the flesh be a general ransom of sin, and become salvation to every creature*: the which St. Paul thus expresseth; *God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh,*

and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: for if our displeasing, injuring, and dishonouring him, who is so great and so good, doth aggravate our offence; the equal excellency and dignity of the Person, submitting in our behalf to the performance of all due obedience and all proper satisfaction, may proportionably advance the reparation offered, and compensate the wrong done to God. Well therefore may we believe, and say with comfort, after the apostle;

Rom. viii. 33.
 Tίς ἐγκαλέσει κατὰ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν; *Who shall criminate against the elect of God? it is God that justifieth,* (it is the Son of God, it is God himself, who satisfies divine justice for us;) *who is there that condemns? it is Christ that died.*

2. We may hence be informed, what reverence and adoration is due from us to our Saviour, and John v. 23. why we must honour the Son, even as we honour Heb. i. 6. Phil. ii. 10. the Father; why even all the angels must worship him; why every thing in heaven, and earth, and beneath the earth must bend the knee (that is, must yield veneration and observance) to him; why by all creatures whatever the same preeminence is to be

ascribed, and the same adoration paid jointly and SERM. equally to God the Father Almighty, who sits upon ^{XXI.} the throne, and to the Lamb, his blessed Son, who Rev. v. 13. standeth at his right hand. Such divine glory and worship we are obliged to yield him, because he is the Son of God, one in essence, and therefore equal in majesty, with his Father : were it not so, it would be injury to God, and sacrilege to do it ; God would not *impart his glory*, we should not attribute it unto another. So this consideration grounds our duty and justifies our practice of worshipping our Lord ; it also encourages us to perform it with faith and hope ; for thence we may be assured, that he, being the Son of God omniscient, doth hear and mind us : being the Son of God omnipotent, he can thoroughly help and save us ; being also, as such, absolutely and immensely good, he will be always disposed to afford what is good and convenient for us in our need.

3. We hence may perceive the infinite goodness Tit. iii. 4. of God toward us, and our correspondent obligation Eph. ii. 4. to love and thankfulness toward him. *In this*, saith ¹ John iv. St. John, was manifested the love of God toward ^{9, 10.} us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. *In this*, adds he, is *love*, (love indeed, love admirable and inconceivable,) not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his only begotten Son to be a propitiation for our sins. Can there be imagined any equal, any like expression of kindness, of mercy, of condescension, as for a prince, himself glorious and happy, most freely to deliver up, out from his own bosom, his own only most dearly beloved Son, to the suffering most base contumelies and most grievous

SERM. pains for the welfare of his enemies, of rebels and traitors to him? even such hath been God's goodness to us: the Son of God, the heir of eternal majesty, was by his Father sent down from heaven, (from the bosom of his glory and bliss,) to put on the form of a servant, to endure the inconveniences of this mortal state, to undergo the greatest indignities and sorrows; that we, *who were alienated, and enemies in our mind by wicked works, might be reconciled to God;* might be freed from wrath and misery; might be capable of everlasting life and salvation: suitable to such unexpressible goodness ought our gratitude to be toward God: what affectionate sense in our hearts, what thankful acknowledgments with our mouths, what dutiful observance in all our actions, doth so wonderful an instance of mercy and goodness deserve and require from us?

4. This consideration may fitly serve to beget in us hope and confidence in God upon any occasions of need or distress; to support and comfort us in all our afflictions; for, *He that so loved us, that he gave his only begotten Son for our salvation and happiness,* how can we ever suspect him as unwilling to bestow on us whatever else shall to his wisdom appear needful or convenient for us? He that out of pure charity and pity toward us did part with a jewel so inestimable, how can any thing seem much for him to give us? it is the consolatory discourse of St. Paul; *He, saith the apostle, that did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* all things that we truly need, all things that we can reasonably desire, all things which are good and fit for us.

*Col. i. 21.
1 John iv.
9.*

John iii. 6.

*Rom. viii.
32.*

5. St. John applieth this consideration to the be- SERM.
getting charity in us toward our brethren. *Beloved,* ^{XXI.}
saith he, *if God so loved us,* (as to send his only be- ^{1 John iv.}
gotten Son into the world, that we might live by
^{12.}
him,) *we ought also to love one another.* If God
so lovingly gave up his only Son for our sakes, what,
(in grateful regard to him, in observant imitation of
him,) what expressions, I say, of charity and good-
will ought we to yield toward our brethren? what
endeavours, what goods, what life of ours should
seem too dear unto us for to expend or impart for
their good? shall we be unwilling to take any pains
or suffer any loss for them, for whom (together with
ourselves) the Son of God hath undergone so much
trouble, so much disgrace, so much hardship? shall
we, I say, be uncharitable, when the Son of God
hath laid upon us such an obligation, hath set before
us such an example?

6. This consideration also may inform us, and
should mind us, concerning the dignity of our nature
and of our condition; and consequently how in re-
spect to them we should behave ourselves. If God
did so much consider and value man, as for his be-
nefit to debase his only Son; if the Son of God him-
self hath deigned to assume our nature, and to ad-
vance it into a conjunction with the divine nature,
then is man surely no inconsiderable or contemptible
thing; then should we despise no man, whom God
hath so regarded and so honoured; then ought we
not to neglect or slight ourselves: if we were worthy
of God's so great care, we ought not to seem unworthy
of our own. We ought to value ourselves,
not so indeed as to be proud of so undeserved honour;
but so as to be sensible thereof, and to suit our

SERM. XXI. demeanour thereto. Reflecting upon these things should make us to disdain to do any thing unworthy that high regard of God, and that honourable alliance unto him. It should breed in us noble thoughts, worthy desires, and all excellent dispositions of soul conformable to such relations ; it should engage us unto a constant practice, beseeming them whom God hath so dignified, whom the Son of God hath vouchsafed to make his brethren : by i.f.::.

Heb. ii. 14.

ingany thing mean or sordid, by doing any thing base or wicked, we greatly undervalue ourselves, we much disparage that glorious family, into which, by the Son of God's incarnation, we are inserted. Ταίτης οὖν τῆς τιμῆς ἀξίαν τὴν φιλοσοφίαν ἐπιδειξώμεθα, καὶ μηδὲ ἔχωμεν κοινὸν πρὸς τὴν γῆν. *Let us therefore, saith St. Chrysostom, shew a philosophy worthy of this honour; having nothing common with this earth.*

(In Joh. i. Hom. 18.)

7. This consideration doth much aggravate all impiety and sin. Wilful sin upon this account appeareth not only disobedience to our Creator and natural Lord, but enormous offence against the infinite bounty and mercy and condescension of our Saviour ; a most heinous abusing the Son of God, who came down into this homely and humble state on Acts iii. 26. purpose to *bless us, in turning every one of us from our iniquities;* to free us from the grievous dominion and from the woful effects of sin; we thereby frustrate the most gracious intentions of God, and defeat the most admirable project that could be for Rom. vi. 22. our benefit and salvation: we thereby *trample upon the Son of God, recrucify him, and put him to an open shame :* so the Apostle to the Hebrews telleth us, implying the heinous guilt and sad consequence Heb. vi. 6.

of doing so; *He*, saith the apostle, *that despised SERM.
Moses's law died without mercy;—Of how much XXI.
worse punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought Heb. x. 28.
worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of
God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant,
wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing?*

8. Lastly, This consideration may serve to beget in us a high esteem of the dispensation evangelical, and hearty submission thereto. Almighty God, (as is signified in the parable,) after several provisions Luke xx. for the good of mankind, and several messages from heaven to the world here, did at last send his Son, with this expectation; *Surely they will reverence my Son*: and surely much reason he had to expect the greatest reverence to be yielded to his person; the readiest credence and obedience to his word. For if any declaration of God concerning his will, of our duty, however proceeding from him, (either by dictate of natural reason, or by the instruction of prophets, or by the ministry of angels,) ought to be entertained with great respect and observance; much more should the overtures of greatest mercy and favour exhibited by his own Son (on purpose sent unto us to discover them) be embraced with highest regard, and humblest reverence, and most hearty compliance. It is the Apostle to the Hebrews his discourse and inference; *Therefore (saith Heb. i. 2.
he, therefore, because God hath in these last times ii. 1, 3.
spoken unto us by his Son) we ought περισσοτέρως
προσέχειν, to give more (abundant, or more) earnest
heed to the things which we have heard; for, sub-
joins he, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great
salvation; which at first began to be spoken by
(our) Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them*

SERM. *that heard him?* Ταῦτ' ὅν διηρεκὼς στρέφοντες, καὶ ἡ

XXI.

λογιζόμενοι ἐκκαθάρωμεν ἡμῶν τὸν βιὸν, καὶ λαμπτὸν ποιή-

μεν Continually therefore revolving and recou-

ing these things, let us cleanse our life, and mi-

Vide Chrys. *it bright:* so we conclude with good St. Chrys-

tom. vi. p.
623, &c.

tom.

*Almighty God, who hast given us thy only
gotten Son to take our nature upon him; gr-
that we being regenerate, and made thy child
by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed
thy Holy Spirit, through the same our Lord Je-
Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and
same Spirit, ever one God, world without e-
Amen.*

Our Lord.

SERMON XXII.

EPHESIANS iv. 5.

One Lord.

AS the name of *God* (truly common to all three SERM. Persons of the Blessed Trinity) is (not in way of exclusion, but) according to a mysterious peculiarity (κατ' οἰκονομίαν, in way of dispensation, accommodated to our instruction, as the Greek fathers express it) attributed to God the Father, who is the Fountain of the Deity, and first in order among the divine Persons; so likewise is the name *Lord*, truly common to the other Persons, peculiarly (though also not exclusively) ascribed and appropriated unto God the Son; who therefore in the style of the New Testament, which more fully hath revealed him, is called sometimes absolutely *Lord*, sometimes *the Lord Jesus*, sometimes *our Lord*; to acknowledge and call him so, being the especial duty, and the distinctive mark or character of a Christian: for, *to us*, as *there is one God and Father of all*, and *one Holy Spirit*, so there is, as St. Paul here in my text doth say, *one Lord*. And otherwhere; *There be* (saith he, there be, according to popular estimation and worldly use) *gods many, and lords many; but to* Luke ii. 11. *O; iovi, Xpi-*
eret, Kūqos. Cor. viii. 5, 6.

SERM. us there is one God the Father, and one Lord
XXII. Jesus Christ. Hence to call upon the name of the

Lord Jesus Christ (that is, by confession and practice to acknowledge him *our Lord*) gives a peri-

^{1 Cor. i. 2.} phasis, or description of a Christian, (*To the church*
^{Acts ix. 14.} *of God that is in Corinth, sanctified in Christ*

Jesus, called to be saints, together with all that
call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in
every place; that is, together with all Christians
every where; so doth St. Paul inscribe his First

^{1 Cor. xii. 3.} Epistle to the Corinthians;) whence, *No man*, saith he in the same Epistle, *can call Jesus Lord, but by*

the Holy Ghost; that is, no man can heartily embrace Christianity without the gracious assistance of God's holy Spirit. The reason of which appellation being so peculiarly attributed unto Christ, may be, for that, beside the natural right unto dominion over us, necessarily appertaining to him as our God, who hath made us, and doth preserve us, there are divers other respects and grounds supervenient, and accruing to him from what he hath undertaken, performed, and undergone for us, in spontaneous obedience to the will of God his Father, upon which also the title of *Lord* is due unto him: the which to declare first, then to apply them unto our practice, shall be the subject and scope of our present Discourse.

In whatsoever notion we take the word *Lord*, either as a prince over subjects, or as a master over servants, or as an owner of goods, or as a preceptor and president over disciples, or as a leader and captain to followers, or as a person singularly eminent above inferiors, he is according to all such notions truly *our Lord.*

According to whatever capacity we distinctly or

abstractively consider him, either as the *Son of God*, SERM.
or as the *Son of man*, or as Θεάθρων, (jointly *God*
XXII.
and man, united in one person,) as *Jesus* our Sa-
viour, as the *Christ of God*, he is *our Lord*.

If we examine all imaginable foundations of just dominion, eminence in nature and power, the collation of being or preservation thereof, donation, conquest, purchase, merit, voluntary compact; upon all these he hath a right of lordship over us duly grounded.

I. He is, I say, first, *our Lord* according to every notion and acceptation of the word *Lord*.

He is our Prince and Governor, we are his subjects and vassals; for to him it was said, *Thy throne, O* Heb. i. 8. *God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.* Of him it was prophesied, that *the government should be upon his shoulder*, Is. ix. 6, 7. and that *of the increase of his government and peace there should be no end*; he is the *King of Israel*, or of the church, who, as the angel told the blessed Virgin, *shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and ever. God hath given him head over all things to the church.* So is he a Prince most Luke i. 33. absolute, endued with sovereign right and power, Eph. i. 22. 1 Cor. xv. crowned with glorious majesty, enjoying all pre-²⁷eminences, and exercising all acts suitable to regal dignity, in respect to all things, and particularly in regard to us.

He also is our Master, and we are his servants; 1 Tim. iii. the church is a house and family, whereof he is the ^{15.} οἰκοδεσπότης, or householder; *If, saith he, they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more those of his household?* (τοὺς οἰκιακοὺς αὐτοῦ, famulos ejus, his domestics, or menial servants.) Matt. xxiv. 45. x. 25.

SERM. *All the family in heaven and earth are named of him*, saith St. Paul; that is, the whole church (both ^{Eph. iii. 15.} triumphant above in heaven, and militant here on earth) is his family, or called the family of him, as of Heb. iii. 6. its Lord. *Christ*, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, *is as a son over his house, whose house are we:* ^{1 Cor. vii.} *He that is called free is a servant of Christ:* and, ^{22.} ^{Col. iii. 24.} *We serve the Lord Christ:* and, *We have a Master in heaven*, saith St. Paul: *Blessed*, saith our ^{Eph. vi. 9.} ^{Col. iv. 1.} ^{Matt. xxiv. 46.} Lord himself, *is that servant, whom his Lord coming shall find so doing;* that is, whom *Christ, our Lord*, coming to judgment, shall find discharging his duty faithfully. He indeed as a good Master governeth, ordereth, and maintaineth his family well; furnisheth and feedeth it with all necessary provisions; protecteth it from all want and all mis-
^{1 Cor. iii. 8.} chief; appointeth to every one therein, his due work ^{Luke vi. 35.}
^{Rev. xxi. 12.} and service, and payeth to each his due wages and recompense.

He is also our Owner, or the Possessor and Pro-
^{2 Pet. ii. 1.} prietary of us; *The Lord that bought us*, as St. Peter calls him; and consequently, who possesseth ^{1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.} ^{vii. 23.} and enjoyeth us. *We are not our own*, saith St. Paul; *for we were bought with a price:* whence we are become entirely subject to his disposal.

He likewise is our Preceptor, or Teacher; that is, the Lord of our understanding, which is subject to the belief of his dictates; and the Lord of our practice, which is to be directed by his precepts.
^{John xiii. 13.} *Ye, saith he, call me Master, and Lord,* (*διδάσκαλον, καὶ κύριον*, *Doctor and Lord,*) *and ye say well, for Matt. xxiii. 10.* *so I am:* and, *Be ye not called masters,* (*καθηγηταί*, *guides in doctrine,*) *for one is your Master, even 2 Cor. x. 5.* *Christ:* and, *Every thought of ours*, saith St. Paul,

is to be *captivated* to the *obedience of Christ*. SERM. Such, as infallibly wise, and perfectly veracious, he ^{XXII.}
necessarily is unto us; such he is, as sent on pur- John i.
pose by God to enlighten our minds with the know-
ledge of heavenly truth, and to *guide our feet into* Luke i. 79.
the ways of peace; whence we cannot but be obliged
to embrace his doctrine, and to observe the rules
which he prescribeth us.

He is therefore also our Captain and Leader; whose orders we must observe, whose conduct we should follow, whose pattern we are to regard and imitate in all things: he is styled ἀρχηγὸς πίστεως, ^{1 Pet. ii. 21.}
the Captain of our faith; ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς, ^{Heb. xii. 2.}
the Captain of our life; ἀρχηγὸς σωτηρίας, ^{ii. 10.}
the Captain of our salvation; ἀρχιποίμην, ^{Acts iii. 15.}
our chief Shepherd, the ^{v. 31.}
Apostle, and High Priest of our profession; ^{1 Pet. iii. 25.}
the Bishop of our souls. In fine, he, according ^{v. 4.}
to what St. Paul says, ἐν πᾶσι πρωτεύει, *hath in all*
things the primacy and preeminence; so that according ^{Col. i. 18.}
to all notions and senses of *lordship* he is our Lord; but chiefly he is meant such in the principal sense, as having an absolute right and power to command and govern us.

II. *Christ* is also *our Lord* according to every capacity or respect of *nature* or *office*, that we can consider appertaining to him.

1. He is *our Lord* as by *nature* the *Son of God*, partaking of the divine essence and perfections: he as such being endued with eminence superlative and with power irresistible; as such having created all things, and upholding all things; whence all things necessarily and justly are subject to his order and disposal; all things according to all right and reason are to be governed, possessed, and used according to

SERM. his pleasure. Hence is that most august and most peculiar name, ***JEHOVAH***, (denoting either independency and indefectibility of subsistence, or uncontrollable and infallible efficacy in operation, or both of them together; which therefore is by the Greek interpreters fitly rendered *Kύπειος*, and after them *Lord* by our translators; for the word *κύπειος* doth signify to subsist, and *κύρωσις* is used to denote efficacy, ratification, steadfast power or authority) as signed to him; *This is his name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS*, saith Jeremiah of him: and, *I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by Jehovah their God*, saith God in Hosea concerning the salvation accomplished by him: and in the prophet Zechariah he thus speaks of himself; *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee*: where it is said that Jehovah, being sent by Jehovah, should come and dwell in the church, enlarged by accession of the Gentiles: who can that be, but *our Lord Christ*, who dwelt among us, and was by God his Father sent unto us? And what in the Old Testament is spoken of Jehovah is by infallible expositors in the New attributed to our Lord; *Sanctify Jehovah Sabaoth, and he shall be for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence*; so did Isaiah speak; and his words are by St. Peter and by St. Paul applied to *Christ*. *Whosoever shall call upon the name of Jehovah shall be delivered*; so did the prophet Joel foretell concerning the latter days; and St. Paul accommodates it to the salvation obtained by confessing the name of Christ. In Ma-

Jer. xxxiii. 6.
Hos. i. 7.
Zech. x. 12.
Jehovah à
Jehova.
Gen. xix.
24.
apud Iren.
iii. 6.

lachi, Jehovah saith, that *he would send his messenger to prepare his way before him*; this, according to the Evangelists' interpretation, was verified in St. John the Baptist's *preparing the way before our Saviour*. Likewise, what Isaiah said, *The voice of him that cried in the wilderness, Prepare the way of Jehovah*, is by all the Evangelists applied to the Baptist, as *the voice crying*, and to our Saviour, as the *Lord coming*: Christ therefore is the *Lord Jehovah*, independent and immutable in essence and in power.

The word *Adon* also, which more immediately and properly doth signify *dominion*, (and which put absolutely doth belong to God,) is plainly attributed to our Saviour. *The Lord (Jehovah) said to my Lord (le Adonai;)* that is, God the Father to Christ<sup>Ps. cx. 1.
Matt. xxii. 43.</sup> the Son, yet Lord of David, as our Saviour himself expounds it. And, *The Lord (ha Adon) shall come to his temple*; so in Malachi it is prophesied concerning the coming of Christ. According to this notion was it, that St. Thomas, being by our Saviour's resurrection convinced of his divinity, cried out, *My God, and my Lord*: in this sense it was, that^{John xx. 28.} St. Peter called our Saviour *Lord*, when he ascribed omniscience to him, saying, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee*. Upon this^{John xxi. 17.} account, St. John the Baptist said, *He that cometh from above is above all things*, which St. Paul expresseth thus; *The second man is the Lord from heaven*. So is Christ, as he is God, *our Lord*.

2. He is also our Lord as *man*, by the voluntary appointment and free donation of God his Father; in regard to the excellency of his Person, and to the merit of his performances. God did by gift and de-

SERM.
XXII.

Mal. iii. 1.
Matt. iii. 3.
Mark i. 2,3.
John i. 23.
Luke vii.
^{27. iii. 4.}
Isa. xl. 3.

SERM. legation confer upon him a supereminent degree of
XXII. dignity and authority, with power to execute the
most lordly acts of enacting, of dispensing with, and
of abrogating laws; of judging, of remitting of-
fences; of dispensing rewards, and of punishing
transgressors. The scripture is copious and empha-
tical in declaring this point both in general terms
Acts ii. 36. and with respect to particulars. *Let all the house*
of Israel, saith St. Peter, *know assuredly, that God*
hath made him Lord and Christ, even this Jesus,
John xvii. *whom ye did crucify:* and, *Thou hast given him*
power over all flesh: *All things are delivered*
Luke x. 22. *unto me by my Father:* *All power is given me*
Mat. xi. 27. *in heaven, and upon earth:* *The Father hath*
xxviii. 18. *loved the Son, and hath given all things into his*
John iii. 35. *hand;* saith he concerning himself: and, *Being*
xiii. 3. *found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself,*
Phil. ii. *and became obedient unto death, even the death of*
8—11. *the cross:* *wherefore God also hath highly exalted*
him, and given him a name which is above every
name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should
bow—and that every tongue should confess that
Eph. i. 20. *Jesus is the Lord:* and, *God raised him from the*
1 Pet. iii. 22. *dead, and set him at his right hand in the heavenly*
places, far above all principality, and power,
and might, and dominion, and every name that is
named, not only in this world, but also in that
which is to come; and hath put all things under
his feet, and gave him to be head over all things
Heb. ii. 9. *to the church:* and, *We see Jesus, who was made*
a little lower than the angels for the suffering of
Rev. v. 12. *death, crowned with glory and honour:* and, *The*
Lamb which was slain is worthy to receive power,
and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour,

and blessing: and, When the Son of man sits upon the throne of his glory, ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. In which places, as in others of the same importance, it is signified generally, that beside the dominion, naturally belonging to our Saviour as God, there hath been conferred on him, as man, an universal dominion over all things in regard to what, as man, he did and suffered; and that in him, as the Apostle to the Hebrews observeth and discoureth, that hath been signally fulfilled which the Psalmist acknowledgeth, and praiseth God for, in respect to man; *Thou crownest him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hand, and didst put all things in subjection under his feet.* In him also was accomplished the prophetical vision of Daniel; *I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man—And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* It is also particularly expressed of him, that to him, as man, is committed a power legislative; *I say unto you, I command you,* is the style he commonly used: and, *The Son of man, said he, is Lord of the sabbath;* (that is, hath a power to dispense with the observation thereof, or to abrogate the positive law concerning it; which by parity of reason infers a general power of constituting and rescinding laws of the like nature.) The prerogative also of remitting sins was given him; *That ye may, saith he, know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins,* (then saith he Matt. ix. 6. Luke v. 24.

SERM.
XXII.
Matt. xix.
28. xxv. 31.
xxvi. 64.

Heb. ii. 7, 8.
Ps. viii. 7.

Dan. vii.
13, 14.

John xv.
10, 12, 14.

SERM. to the sick of the palsy,) *Arise, take up thy bed,*
 XXII. *and walk:* and, *The God of our fathers, saith St.*
 Acts v. 30. *Peter, hath raised Jesus, whom ye slew, and hanged*
 31. *on a tree; him hath God exalted with his right*
hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give re-
pentance unto Israel, and remission of sins. The
 administration of justice and judgment he thus
 Acts x. 42. also hath; for he is, ὁρισμένος ἐπὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ κριτής, or-
 xvii. 31. *dained by God the Judge of quick and dead;* God
 hath appointed to judge the world, εἰς ἀρδίᾳ τῷ ὄρισε, by
 John v. 22, *the man whom he hath ordained: The Father*
 27. *judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment*
to the Son—and hath given him authority to exe-
cute judgment also, ὅτι νιὸς ἀνθρώπου ἔστι because, or
whereas, he is the Son of man: so also for the pre-
 Matt. xvi. *rogative of distributing rewards and inflicting pu-*
 27. *nishments; The Son of man, saith he, shall come*
in the glory of his Father with his angels, and re-
ward every man according to his work. Thus by
 emphatical expression it is signified, that Christ, *as*
man, is our Lord, by God's appointment and dona-
tion. We may also consider, that our Saviour, *as*
the Son of David, and consequently by a right of
succession, according to divine ordination, as King
of Israel, (to the which all Christians are become
 Heb. xii. *proselytes; for, προσεληνύθατε Σιὼν ὅρει, Ye are proso-*
 22. *lytes to mount Sion, and to the city of the living*
God, the heavenly Jerusalem, saith the Apostle to
 the Hebrews,) is our Lord; according to that of the
 Luke i. 32. *angel to the blessed Virgin; He shall be great, and*
shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the
Lord God shall give him the throne of David his
Father; and he shall reign over the house of Is-
 Isa. ix. 7. *rael for ever and ever: Of the increase of his go-*
 Acts ii. 30.

*vernment there shall be no end, upon the throne of SERM.
David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to XXII.
establish it with judgment and with justice from
henceforth even for ever: so Isaiah foretold of him;
and many like passages occur in other prophets.*

3. He also considered as Θεάνθρωπος (*as God and man*, united in one Person) is plainly our Lord. For whatever naturally did appertain to God, whatever freely was (in way of gift or reward) communicated to man, doth accrue to the Person, and is attributed thereto, in consequence of the union hypostatical, or personal. It was indeed by virtue thereof, that *the man Christ Jesus* became capable of so high preferments; wherefore most properly upon this consideration is Christ *the Lord of all*, as St. Peter styles ^{Acts x. 36.} him; *having all things (him only excepted, who did* ^{1 Cor. xv. 27.} *subject all things to him) put under his feet.*

4. If we also consider him as *Jesus*, our Saviour, that notion doth involve acts of dominion, and thence resulteth a title thereto: nothing more becomes a *Lord*, than to protect and save; none better deserves the right and the name of a *Lord*, than a Saviour; wherefore those titles are well conjoined; *I am the* ^{Isa. xliv. 11.} *Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour*, saith God in Isaiah of himself; and, *Him hath God exalted* ^{Acts v. 31.} *to be a Prince and a Saviour to his right hand,* saith St. Peter concerning Jesus.

5. Likewise if he be considered as *the Christ*, that especially implieth him anointed, and consecrated to sovereign dominion, as king of the church: well therefore did the angel express his joyful message when he told the shepherds; *I bring you good* ^{Luke ii. 11.} *tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people;* *for unto you is born this day in the city of David*

SERM. *a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord*: and St. Peter
 XXII. well joined them, saying, *Let all the house of Is-*
^{Acts ii. 36.} *rael know assuredly, that God hath made that*
same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord
and Christ. Thus in all respects is Christ our
Lord.

III. Let us also further briefly survey the several grounds upon which dominion may be built, and we shall see that upon all accounts he is our *Lord*.

1. "An uncontrollable power and ability to govern is one certain ground of dominion ; he that is endued therewith, it is necessary that we should submit to him, it is reasonable willingly to admit him for our Lord : persons so qualified, Aristotle telleth us, have a natural title to dominion ; as, on the contrary, persons weak, (in power or in wisdom,) unable to protect themselves, and unfit to manage things, are naturally subjects and servants. This ground eminently agrees to him, as being by nature the Almighty God, who can do all things, whom nothing

^{John xiii. 3.} can resist ; and also for that *all things are given into his hand*, all things are put under his feet.

^{Matt. xvi. 18.} Hence he is most able to protect us ; *the gates of hell cannot prevail against his church* ; ^{John x. 28.} *none can snatch us out of his hand* ; ^{Heb. vii. 25.} *he is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God through him.*

2. To make, to preserve, to provide and dispense maintenance, are also clear grounds of dominion ; for what can we more justly claim dominion over,

² Ό τρώτος (ώς ἔσικεν) καὶ κυρώσατος οὐμός, τῷ σώζεσθαι δεομένῳ, τὸ σῶμα δυνάμενον, ἄρχοντα κατὰ φύσιν ἀποδίδωσι. Plut. in Pelop.

Προσήκει γοῦν δεῖ τῷ κρείττονι κατὰ φύσιν ἡγεῖσθαι τοῦ χείρως. Clem. Alex. Strom. vii. (p. 506.)

Τὸ δυνάμενον φύσει προορῆν ἄρχον φύσει, καὶ δεσπόζον φύσει. Arist. Pol. i. 1, 3, 4.

than over our own inventions and works ; over that SERM. which we continually keep and nourish ; over that ^{XXII.} which wholly depends upon us, and subsists merely by our pleasure ? Since then *in him we live, and move, and have our being* ; since we have derived ^{Acts xvii. 28.} all our being from him, (our being natural as men, and spiritual as Christians,) and are by him, *who upholdeth all things*, sustained therein ; since, as to ^{Heb. i. 3. Col. i. 17. John xv. 5. 2Cor. iii. 5.} all our powers and in all our actions, we depend upon him ; for *without him we can do nothing* ; and *all our sufficiency is of him* ; he surely is our Lord, having an absolute right to dispose of us, to order us, and to use us, according to his discretion and pleasure. We thence have reason to render that acknowledgment of the elders in the Revelation to him ; *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive the glory*, ^{Rev. iv. 11.} *and the honour, and the power* ; for thou hast created all things, and for thy will they are, and they were created ; to confess and celebrate him as our Lord, for that, as it is in the Psalm, *It is he that made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.* ^{Psal. c. 3.} ^b Thus by birth, and privilege of nature, as the Son of God, heir apparent, and consort of eternal Majesty ; thus also, as concurring with his Father in the divinest actions of creation and providence, is *Jesus Christ*, the only Son of God, *our Lord*.

But beside these natural grounds of dominion over us, there are several others considerable, each of

^b Χριστὸς φύσει Κύριος, καὶ βασιλεὺς ἀΐδιος ὁν οὐχ ὅτε ἀποστέλλεται καλλω γίνεται Κύριος· οὐδὲ τότε ἀρχὴν λαμβάνει τοῦ εἶναι Κύριος, καὶ βασιλεὺς, ἀλλ' ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἄει, τοῦτο καὶ τότε κατὰ σάρκα πεποίηται· καὶ Διπροσάμενος τάντας γίνεται καὶ οὕτως ζώγεται καὶ νεκρῶν Κύριος. Ath. Orat. iii. in Ar. pag. 385.

SER M. them, according to the standing rules of justice and equity, sufficient to found a good title thereto. We (considering ourselves as the sons of Adam, in that state wherein Christ found us, or wherein we should now be, if he had not vouchsafed to come and redeem us) had attempted to withdraw ourselves from our due subjection to God, by wilful rebellion and disobedience ; we thence had forfeited the benefit of God's favourable protection and providence for our

Eph. ii. 1, 5. good : we had become outlaws, dead in law, (*dead in trespasses and sins;*) we, instead of being subjects and servants of God, were become (or should

Col. i. 21. have been) *aliens, and enemies to God by wicked*

Rom. viii. 7, 8, 9. *works,* according to the natural *blindness of our minds not knowing* (or acknowledging) *God* ; in our affections estranged and averse from him, in our practice opposite to his holy will and righteous laws, we in a manner were got out of God's possession ; were in respect to him become imbecile and *lost* ;

Luke xix. we were *like sheep gone astray* out of the fold of

Matt. xviii. 10. his gracious care and governance ; we had got other

11. x. 6. masters, and were come into other hands ; like those

xv. 24. *peasants*, who in the prophet confess, *O Lord our God, other*

Psal. cxix. 176. *lords beside thee have had dominion over us.* The

Isa. xxvi. 13. Devil had got us into his power ; we were *captivated*

2 Tim. ii. 26. (or taken alive, as St. Paul phraseth it, *εξωγρημένοι*)

Acts x. 38. Col. ii. 13. *at his will* ; we were detained under wretched sub-

John xiv. 30. jection, overpowered, and oppressed by him ; who

Eph. vi. 12. Eph. vi. 2. therefore is called *the Prince and the God of this*

ii. 2. *world* ; to whose suggestions it hearkened, whose

2 Cor. iv. 4. James iv. 4. 1 John ii. 15. will it observed, whom it was prone even to worship

1 John v. 19. 15. and adore. The world also (whose *friendship is*

Eph. ii. 2. *enmity to God*, which *all lieth in wickedness*) had

Rom. vii. 23. vi. 12. 16, &c. prevailed over us, so as to *walk according to it*; to

Tit. iii. 3.

be governed by its corrupt principles and vicious SERM. practices ; to be driven by its force, and drawn by XXII. its allurement, into evil. We were captives and slaves also to the law of sin ruling in our mem- Rom. viii. bers; serving divers lusts and pleasures; being in 7, 8. our actions guided by a *carnal mind*, opposite to God and goodness; swayed by sensual appetites, and hurried by violent passions to what is bad : this was the condition of mankind generally when Christ came, and would have so continued ; but out of it he came to deliver us ; by the merit of his blood, and power of his grace, to free us from the oppressions of all those usurping powers ; to recover and restore us into the propriety, possession, and protection of God. *He came to seek and to save that Luke xix. which was lost ; to save us from our enemies, and 10. Matt. x. 6. from the hand of all that hate us ; to deliver us out Luke i. 71. Col. i. 13. of the power of darkness, and to translate us into his own kingdom, the kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy.* So that he hath acquired us to himself ; we being now περιποίησις, an acquist made Rom. xiv. by him, as St. Paul calleth us, and λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν,^{17.} as St. Peter speaks, *a people by acquisition pecu-* Eph. i. 14. ^{1 Pet. ii. 9.} liarily appertaining to him : and divers ways we have been acquired to him, as to our Lord.

3. He hath acquired us by free donation from God his Father ; for *God hath given him power John xvii. over all flesh ; God hath delivered all things into 2. xiii. 3. Eph. i. 22. his hand ; God hath subjected all things under his feet.* Peculiarly God hath given unto him those who comply with his gracious invitations and suggestions ; his *sheep, that hear his voice, and follow John x. 27.* him ; them hath God given him, to govern them with especial favour, and keep them with a parti-

SERM. cular care; *Whom, saith he, thou hast given me, I have kept;* and, *This is the will of the Father that sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing.*

^{John xvii. 12, 6. vi. 39.} 4. Again, he hath acquired us by just *right of conquest*, having subdued those enemies unto whom (partly by their fraud and violence, partly from our own will and consent) we did live enslaved and ad-
^{Col. ii. 15.} dicted: them he vanquished, *having spoiled principalities, and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them.* Whence we rightly fall under subjection to him, as accessions to his vic-
 tory; having formerly belonged to his enemies, and having by his mercy been preserved: he might justly have deprived us of liberty and of life; might have utterly destroyed us, or have detained us in woful misery, as dependents upon and partisans with his foes; ourselves together with them being found in
^{Rom. v. 8.} open hostility against him: but *according to his great mercy he saved us;* and did put us into a
^{10. Col. i. 18.} capacity of a free, comfortable, and happy life under
^{Eph. i. 8. Tit. iii. 3.} him, *calling us to his kingdom and glory.* We
^{1 Thess. ii. 12.} therefore being *subacti potentia,* (subdued by his power,) become *jure subditi,* (in right subject to him,) [being *servati*, we are made *servi*;] being saved from death by him, we according to justice and reason become vassals to him, so that all our life should be devoted to his service; that (as it is
^{Luke i. 74.} in the hymn *Benedictus)* *being delivered out of the hands of our enemies,* (his enemies, and our enemies also, no less in truth and effect,) *we should serve him without fear.*

5. He hath also further acquired us to himself by *purchas*e; having by a great price bought us, ran-

somed us out of sad captivity, and redeemed us from SERM. grievous punishment due to us. We, as heinous sinners and rebels, had forfeited our lives to God's law, and were sentenced unto a miserable death ; we had lost our liberty, and were thrown into a grievous prison, fettered in guilt, lying under wrath, and re-served to punishment unavoidable ; we were stripped of all goods, all comfort, all hope and remedy : such was the case of man, when he procured a redemption, a pardon, a deliverance, and restitution for us ; delivering up himself *a ransom for us all* ; under-^{1 Tim. ii. 6.} going a punishment for our sins, discharging our debts, propitiating divine justice, acquitting us from all claims and pretences upon us ; yea meriting for ³⁴ us, a better state than we did ever before stand in : thus *he purchased his church with his own blood* ; <sup>Acts xx. 28.
1 Pet. i. 18.
1 Cor. vi.
20. vii. 23.</sup> whence, as St. Paul argues, *we are not our own, for we are bought with a price*^c. In requital for such mercies and favours so unexpressibly great, we cannot, either in gratitude or justice, owe less than ourselves to be rendered up wholly to his dominion and disposal ; it is our duty therefore to be his subjects and servants ; and it was indeed the intent of his doing so much for us, that we should be so : he did all *gratis*, (most freely,) as to any precedent motive beside his own goodness ; but he would not do it fruitlessly, as to effect ; *To this end*, saith St. Paul, ^{Rom. xiv.} *Christ both died, rose, and revived, that he might⁹ be Lord both of the dead and living : He died for² Cor. v. 15. all, that they, which henceforth live, should not live to themselves, but unto him which died for them :*

^c Οὐ γάρ οὐρανὸν, καὶ γῆν, καὶ θάλασσαν δόντ, ἀλλὰ τὸ πάντων τοῦτον τιμώτερον, τὸ ἑαυτοῦ αἷμα καταθεῖς, οὗτος ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρασε. Chrys.
Ἀνδρ. 21.

S E R M. and, *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

6. He likewise acquired a lordship over us by desert, and as a reward from God, suitable to his performances of obedience and patience, highly satisfactory and acceptable to God; *For this the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again: He humbled himself, becoming obedient to the death of the cross; therefore also did God exalt him, and gave him a name above every name: For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross; and having despised the shame, sat down at the right hand of the glory of God:*

We see Jesus, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour: He drank of the brook in the way, therefore he hath lifted up his head: Because he poured out his soul unto death; therefore did God divide him a portion with the great, and he did divide the spoil with the strong, as the prophet expresseth it.

7. We may add, that he hath acquired a good right and title to dominion over us, as our continual most munificent benefactor; by the great benefits he bestoweth on us, by the ample hire and large recompence he pays us. He affords us a sure protection under him, and a liberal maintenance; high privileges, and ample rewards for our service: it is no Egyptian bondage that he would detain us in, requiring hard labour, and yielding no comfort or recompence; but it is a most beneficial and fruitful service. Christ hath promised to withhold no good thing from his servants; nothing requisite for the support or convenience even of this temporal life,

(for to them who seek the kingdom of God, and its SER M.
 righteousness, even all these things shall be added, XXII.
 or cast in;) but especially most inestimable precious ^{Matt. vi. 33.}
 recompenses he hath promised, and will certainly ^{Rom. viii. 28.}
 bestow in spiritual and eternal blessings; *He will* ^{2 Pet. i. 4.}
render to every man according to his works; to
them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek
glory and honour and immortality, eternal life;
 saith St. Paul: and, *Being freed from sin,* saith he ^{Rom. vi. 22.}
 again, *and made servants to God, ye have your*
fruit unto sanctification, and in the end everlasting
life: a fruit to sanctification, that is, all benefits
 conducing to our spiritual welfare here, and here-
 after a life in perpetual joy and happiness. To them
 who have been diligent in performing their tasks,
 and improving their talents committed to them now
 for his interest and honour, he will one day say,
Well done, good and faithful servants, enter into ^{Matt. xxv.}
your Master's joy: and, *Blessed,* saith our good ^{Rev. xi. 18.}
Master, are ye, when men shall revile you, and ^{Matt. v. 12.}
speak all manner of evil against you falsely, for
my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great
shall your reward be in heaven. Now he that is
 at such care and charges for us, who feeds and fur-
 nishes us so plentifully, who rewards our small pains,
 our poor works, our unprofitable services, (such in-
 deed we must confess all that we can do to be,) with
 so high and bountiful wages, him surely most justly
 we should esteem, and most willingly call, our good
 Lord and Master.

8. Yea further yet, our Saviour Jesus is not only
 our Lord by nature, and by acquisition in so many
 ways, (by various performances, deserts, and obliga-
 tions put on us,) but he is also so by our own deeds,

S E R M. by most free and voluntary, most formal and solemn,
XXII. and therefore most obligatory, acts of ours. ^cHe is our Lord and King by election ; we finding ourselves oppressed by cruel tyrants and enemies, groaning under intolerable slaveries, loaded with heavy burdens, plunged into grievous distresses, tormented with anxious fears, regrets, and sorrows, had our recourse unto him, upon his gracious invitation, offering us deliverance, ease, and refreshment, under his

Matt. xi. 28. most equal and gentle government ; *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest—Take my yoke upon you ;—for my yoke is easy, and my burden light :* so he was pleased to invite us ; and so we did, or have at least seemed and pretended to undergo his yoke, freely submitting to his government : we have vowed perpetual allegiance and fealty to him, as to our lawful Prince ; we have promised entire subjection to his will, and sincere obedience to his laws ; we have engaged, forsaking all things, to follow him ; to follow

2 Tim. ii. 3. him as our Captain, and to fight resolutely under his banners, against the common enemies of his glory
iv. 8.

Matt. xx. 2. and our salvation. We did, *συμφωνεῖν*, (as it is in the parable,) *contract* and agree with him upon certain conditions and considerations, most advantageous to ourselves, to be his faithful servants, and diligently to perform his work : we renounced all other masters ; yea resigned up all claim to any liberty or power over ourselves ; becoming absolutely devoted to his will and command : this we did at our baptism, in most express and solemn manner, and in every re-

Chrys.
 Ἀνδρ. 21.

^c Καθάπερ ἡμεῖς οἰκετὰς ἀγορᾶζοντες, αὐτὸς τοὺς πωλουμένους πρότερον ἐρωτᾶμεν εἰ βούλονται ἡμῖν δουλεύσαι· οὖτω καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς τοιεῖ· ἐπειδὰν, &c. οὐ γὰρ κατηναγκασμένη ἡ δεσποτεία αὐτοῦ ἔστι, &c. Chrys. Ἀνδρ. 21.

ligious performance we confirm our obligation; when we acknowledge his right over us, and our duty toward him; when we implore his protection, his succour, and his mercy; when we promise our humble respect and obedience to him: if our daily confessions do signify any thing; if our vows and protestations have any truth or heart in them; if our prayers are serious, our praises are hearty, our communions have in them any thing of good earnest and sincerity; we do by them continually tie faster the band of this relation and duty toward him; he by our renewed choices, and consents, and promises, and acknowledgments, doth appear to be our Lord. But let thus much suffice for explication of this point; or for considering upon what grounds Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, is our Lord: now for practical application of the point thereof.

1. The general influence which this doctrine may and should have upon our practice is very obvious and palpable. If we are truly persuaded that Christ is our Lord and Master, we must then see ourselves obliged humbly to submit unto and carefully to observe his will; to attend unto, and to obey his law, with all readiness and diligence; for, *Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?* Luke vi.46. is the expostulation of our Lord himself, implying it to be a vain and absurd profession, an irrational and illusive pretence we make, when we avow and invoke him as our Lord, but withal disclaim his authority in our practice, by slothfully neglecting or wilfully disobeying his commands: *Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven;* that is, not he that

Matt. vii.
21.

SERM. makes loud and eager professions (crying Lord, over
XXII. and over again) is in God's esteem a loyal subject, or
faithful servant, or shall obtain the rewards assigned
to such ; but he that, although perhaps more sparing
in words and pretences, doeth really his duty, and

Matt. vii. performs the will of God. *Many*, saith our Saviour
^{22.}
Luke xiii. again, *shall in that day* (in that great day of final
^{25.} account and recompense) *say unto me, Lord, Lord,*
have we not in thy name prophesied, and in thy
name cast out devils, and in thy name done many
wonderful works ? and then will I profess unto
them, I never knew you ; depart from me, ye that
work iniquity. Not only bare professions and ac-
knowledgments are insufficient, but even the fairest
and most plausible actions done in the name of
Christ will avail nothing, without real obedience to
the law of Christ ; even then, when such actions are
performed, Christ doth not know them ; that is, doth
not esteem them his servants ; the working of ini-
quity rendering them incapable of that name and
privilege. Such persons do, as St. Paul speaks, *pro-*
fess to know him, (or acknowledge him as their
Lord,) *but with their works they deny him ; who are*
disobedient, and to every good work reprobate,

Tit. i. 16. *(that is, upon trial found bad and false;) they*, as St.
² Pet. i. 16. Peter says, *deny the Lord that bought them. Do*
Rom. vi. *ye not know*, saith St. Paul, *that to whom ye yield*
^{16.} *yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are*
John viii. *whom ye obey ? and, Every one*, saith our Saviour,
^{34.}
² Pet. ii. 19. *that doeth sin is the servant of sin : and, By whom*
Πάτερες
καὶ Λόδος, *saith St. Peter, a man is overcome, to him he is*
καὶ ζωτοῦς *made a servant, or enslaved, (δεδούλωται.) It is not*
προσηγορία. *what we say, but what we do ; not what we would*
Mar. Lugd. *Euseb. v. 2.* *seem, but what we indeed are, doth really constitute,*

and truly denominate us servants : we not only shall SERM.
 lose the rewards and privileges granted to the ser- XXII.
 vants of Christ, but we do even forfeit all claim to
 the very name, if we disobey his commands, being
 indeed properly servants to those lusts which sway
 us ; to that devil, whose pleasure we fulfil ; to that
 world, whose bad manners we follow : we do but in-
 vade and usurp the name of Christians, if our prac-
 tice is not conformed to the precepts of our Lord^c.

2. Indeed the consideration of this point doth clearly demonstrate to us the great heinousness of sin ; how many follies, iniquities, basenesses, and ingratitudes lie complicated therein : the madness of opposing irresistible power, and dissenting from infallible wisdom : the unworthiness of offending and abusing immense goodness ; the injustice and disloyalty which are couched in the disobedience of him, who by so many titles, and upon so many obligations, is our Lord : the abusiveness of evacuating all his laborious and expensive designs in acquiring us ; the levity and giddiness of disavowing him by our practice, whom we so often have acknowledged our Lord, and vowed entire subjection unto.

3. Again, if Christ be our Lord, then are we not our own lords, or our own men ; we are not at liberty, or at our own disposal, as to our persons or our actions : those rules of the civil law, *that a servant*^{ο δοῦλος οὐ μηδεπί}
can possess nothing of his own, that no profit^{μηδέπι διστάσεις του δούλου,}
^{Ιερεύς, ἄλλα.}
^{Ἄλλοι λατίνους,}

^c Mendacium est Christianum se dicere, et opera Christi non Arist. Pol. facere. Ambr. It is a lie, to call one's self a Christian, and not to do the works of Christ, as St. Ambrose saith. Omnino nihil prodest nomen sanctum babere sine moribus ; quia vita a professione discordans abrogat illustris tituli honorem per indignorum actuum vilitatem. Salv. de Gub. Dei, iii. sub fin.

SERM. can simply accrue to him, but all in result must go to his lord : that he is reckoned nobody in law, and the like, do most perfectly agree to us in regard to Christ, who is upon so many accounts absolutely our Lord, infinitely more than one man can be to another. We consequently must not think to have our own wills, we must not attend our own business, we must not please our own appetites, or gratify our own desires, or enjoy our own pleasures, or follow our own fancies, or regard our own profits, or seek our own honour ; we must not undertake or prosecute any thing merely our own, or further than doing so is subordinate unto or consistent with the service, interest, and glory of our Lord : otherwise we do constitute ourselves the lords and masters, in effect renouncing and casting off him : if he be truly our Lord, it is his will and word that should be the rule of all our actions ; which we should diligently attend unto, which we should readily observe : it is his business, that we should with especial care mind, and most earnestly prosecute ; it is his advantage and credit, that we should propound unto ourselves, as the main aims of all our endeavours. Whatever we design or undertake of moment, we should do it with this formal consideration and reference ; doing it as the servants of Christ, from conscience of our duty to him, with intention therein to serve him, with expectation of reward only from him ; according to those apostolical precepts ; *Whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, we should do all to the glory of our Lord* : we must glorify him with our bodies and our spirits, which are his : we must not live to ourselves, but to him that died, and rose again for us : since whether we live or die, (that

Τῷ Λόγῳ
τερι τοῦ Θεοῦ
μὴ ἀπεθανεῖν.
Arist. Pol.
vi. 2.

¹ Cor. x. 31.

¹ Cor. vi. *or whatever we do, we should do all to*

^{20.} *the glory of our Lord* : we must glorify him with

² Cor. v. 15. *our bodies and our spirits, which are his* : we must

not live to ourselves, but to him that died, and rose again for us : since whether we live or die, (that

is, whatever action we set upon relating either to SERM.
life or death,) *we are the Lord's*; we should direct XXII.
all to his honour, profit, and service.

4. If Christ be our Lord, (absolutely and entirely such,) then can we have no other lords whatever, in opposition to him, or in competition with him; or otherwise any way than in subordination and subserviency to him; *No man*, as he doth himself tell ^{Matt. vi.} us, *can serve two lords*; that is, two lords having ^{24.} collateral or equal authority; their injunctions will interfere, oppose, or supplant one the other; our affections will incline to one more than to the other; at least we shall be detained in hovering suspense; our leisure, our care, our endeavour being employed in the service or attendance of one, will force us to neglect and disappoint the other; *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon*; serving wealth (that is, eagerly affecting it, and earnestly pursuing it) is inconsistent with our duty to Christ; the like may be said of honour, of pleasure, of curiosity, of any worldly thing; for, *He that will be a friend of the world* ^{James iv. 4.} ~~is thereby~~, saith St. James, *constituted an enemy of God*; and if he thereby be made an enemy, he surely can be no good servant; a servant being (as the philosopher calls him) *humilis amicus, a meaner sort of friend*; who performeth service out of goodwill and affection; like St. Paul, who discharged that high and laborious service, of preaching the gospel, incumbent on him, and of that kindly necessity which he expresses, saying, *The love of Christ* ^{2 Cor. v. 14.} ~~constrains me~~; or as St. Peter enjoins those particular servants of Christ (employed by him in teaching and guiding his people) to do their duty, $\mu\eta\ \alpha\nu\alpha\gamma\kappa\sigma\tau\omega\varsigma$, $\delta\lambda\lambda'\ \epsilon\kappa\nu\sigma\iota\omega\varsigma$, *not by constraint, but willingly*;

SER.M. *not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind*; or as St.

XXII. Paul chargeth all servants, *μετ' εὐνοίας δουλεύειν*, to

Eph. vi. 7. *serve with good-will, as to the Lord, and not to men.* It is indeed the proper nature and the necessary condition of this service, that we decline, forsake, renounce, detest all other obligations, all affections, all encumbrances, which may avert us from a

Luke xiv. close adherence thereto. *Whoever, saith he, he be of you, that forsaketh not* (or, who renounceth not, who biddeth not farewell to, *δις οὐκ ἀποστέλλει*) *all that he hath, cannot be my disciple*, or my follower

Luke xiv. and servant: *If any man cometh after me, and do not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, yea and his own life, he cannot be my disciple*; he cannot indeed truly and heartily be so, who in love and observance of Christ will not readily forsake and lose all.

5. Particularly therefore, if Christ be our Lord, we are thereby disengaged, yea we are indeed prohibited, from pleasing or honouring men, so as to obey any command, to comply with any desire, or to follow any custom of theirs, which is repugnant

Gal. i. 10. to the will or precept of Christ: *If*, saith St. Paul, *I did yet please men*, (that is, humour, soothe, or flatter them, so the word *ἀρέσκειν* doth import,) *I were not the servant of Christ*; that is, I were not such in effect, I did in so doing not behave myself as a servant of Christ; as it becomes such an one,

1 Cor. vii. 23. and as such an one is obliged to do. And, *Ye, saith he again, are bought with a price, be not the servants of men*, (or, *ye are not the servants of man*, so the words will bear rendering;) that is, ye therefore do not, or ye therefore ought not, to per-

form service to men, absolutely as such, or with ultimate relation unto them ; but when ye lawfully and allowably do it, ye do it out of conscience, and regard to Christ, as his servants. We may indeed, yea in duty we must, obey men humbly and willingly, diligently and faithfully, in our stations, and according to our conditions, as we are placed and called in this world, either as subjects or servants ; but we must do this in subordination to our principal and supreme Lord ; in obedience to his command, and with regard to his service ; so we are taught by St. Paul : *Servants, saith he, obey Eph. vi. 5, your masters according to the flesh with fear and trembling,* (that is, very respectfully and carefully,) *in singleness of heart, as to Christ ; not in eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ ; doing the will of God from the soul ; serving with good-will, as to the Lord, and not unto men :* and, *Be subject, saith St. Peter, to every human constitution, διὰ τὸν Κύριον, for the Lord ;* (that is, out of conscientious regard or affection to the Lord ; because he is our Lord;) *as free, and not having your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God :* yea, *Whatsoever Col. iii. 23, saith that wise instructor, St. Paul, again) ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men ; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive back the recompence of inheritance ; for ye serve the Lord Christ.*

6. It is, we see, (which may be another improvement of this consideration) not only an engagement, but an encouragement to the performance of all duty ; particularly to the performance of those hard duties, (so contrary to natural will and stomach,)

SERM. cheerful obedience and submission to men ; who
 XXII. often, as St. Peter intimates, are *σκολοί*, *crooked*, or
^{1 Pet. ii. 28.} untoward and harsh in their dealings with their
 servants ; to whom yet upon this consideration he
 enjoins us willingly to yield obeisance, no less than
 to *the good and gentle* ; for that in this and all
 other performances of duty we do serve a most
 equal and kind Master, who will graciously accept
 our service, and abundantly requite it ; a Lord, that
 will not suffer his servants to want any needful sus-
 tenance, any fit encouragement, any just protection
 or assistance ; who will not only faithfully pay them
 their promised allowance, but will advance them to
 the highest preferment imaginable. No man ever
 had reason to complain with them in the prophet ;
^{Mal. iii. 14.} *It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances ?* No ; the Devil him-
 self with envy and regret observing the benefits
 and blessings which the pious man enjoyed in re-
^{Job i. 9, 10.} gard to his faithful service, could not but say ; *Doth Job serve God for nought ? hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side ? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.* No wonder, argued the de-
 tracting spirit, and little thank or praise is due to a
 servant, whose service is so bountifully rewarded.
 Indeed our Lord is not only just and faithful, so as
 to render unto every man *ἰδίον μισθὸν κατὰ τὸν ἴδιον κόπον*, ^{1 Cor. iii. 8.} *a proper reward answerable to his proper pains* ; but he is exceedingly, beyond expression, li-
 beral in bestowing on his servants retributions infi-
 nitely surpassing the desert and worth of all their
 labours : for their small, weak, faint, imperfect, and

transitory endeavours, (by all which he is indeed SERM.
really nothing the richer, or the greater,) he re- XXII.
turneth blessings in nature, in degree, in duration,
immensely great, precious, and glorious. He fails
not here to feed them with food convenient, to clothe
them decently, to supply all their needs, to comfort
them in all distresses, to keep them in all safety, to
deliver them from all evil ; he afterwards conferreth
on them a kingdom, an incorruptible and unfading
crown ; a state of perfect joy and endless glory.

7. It is a great comfort also for a Christian (how mean and low soever in his worldly condition) to consider the dignity and excellency of this his relation ; how great and how good a Lord he serveth ; that the greatest princes are his fellow subjects ; (for, *He is the King of kings and Lord of lords : All Rev. xix.
kings shall fall down before him ; all nations shall*^{16.} *serve him.* Yea, that the highest angels are his^{17.} fellow servants ; (as the angel in the Revelation told Rev. xxii.8.
St. John.) That although his Lord be so high in
power and glory above all, yet he is so gracious, as Eph. i. 20.
not to neglect or despise him ; but condescendeth to Luke i. 48.
regard the lowest of his servants with equal care
and favour as the highest ; *He accepteth not the*^{Job xxxiv.} *persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more*^{18.} *than the poor ; for they all are the work of his
hands,* said good Elihu ; and they all, we might
add, are the price of his blood.

8. And as it is a comfort to the meanest, so it is no shame or disparagement for the greatest of men to serve such a Lord ; it is a relation in itself more worthy and honourable than the highest dignity or preferment in the world : to wear a crown, how rich soever ; to command the whole earth ; to possess all

SERM. the land, and all the gold under heaven, are beggarly, trivial, and sordid things in comparison there-

XXII. to ; a servant of Christ (the apostolical style) is a style far more glorious than all those windy titles, which the greatest monarchs assume to themselves ; having such a place in God's peculiar regard and care doth exceed all privileges and advantages, all glories and dignities, which any person is capable

Phil. iii. 8. of : well therefore did St. Paul, in respect to *the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ his Lord*, esteem all such things (all worldly privileges and benefits) *as loss and as dung*, as things detrimental and despicable ; wisely did the holy apostles forsake all things, (all their dearest relations, all their sweetest enjoyments, all their secular occupa-

Luke xviii. 28. tions,) to follow such a Lord. (*Behold, saith St. Peter, we have let go all things, and have followed thee.*) Most just and reasonable are those sentences, pronounced against those vainly proud, or perversely contumacious people, who are ashamed to obey him,

Luke ix. 26. or do reject his government ; *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me or of my words, him shall the Son of man be ashamed of, when he comes in the glory of himself, and of his Father, and the holy angels.*

Them who proudly disdain to serve him here, will he with just and sad disdain reject hereafter from his face and favour ; yea with dreadful vengeance

Luke xix. 27. will he punish their perverseness ; *Those mine enemies, will he say, that would not have me reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.*

9. St. Paul also maketh use of this consideration, to press upon superiors their duties toward their inferiors ; their duties of equity, meekness, kindness,

mercy, pity, and all humanity ; *Masters*, saith he, SERM. *yield unto your servants that which is just and XXII. equal* ; *knowing that ye also have a Master in Col. iv. 1. heaven* : and, *Ye masters*, saith he again, *do the Eph. vi. 9. same things to them*, (perform the like good offices, shew the same good-will to your servants,) *forbearing menaces* ; *knowing that your Master also is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him*. Thus in Leviticus God commandeth his people not to rule over their servants with rigour, assign- Lev. xxv. ing this reason, *For they are my servants*, &c. And 42, 43, 55. we know how our Saviour, as he doth commend and bless those wise and honest servants, who, being appointed over his household, (that is, being placed in any superior rank or charge,) do behave themselves justly and kindly to their fellow-servants, dispens- Matt. xxiv. 45, 49. xvii. 28, &c. ing to them their food in due season ; so upon those who injuriously or rudely do beat or abuse their fellow-servants ; who are harsh, rigorous, or unmerciful in exactions of debt, or in any other dealings toward them, he denounceth severe chastisement. *A ser- 2 Tim. ii. vant of the Lord* (that is, one employed by Christ 24. in any office or charge) *must not fight, but must be gentle unto all*, saith St. Paul ; such indeed should be the humility and goodness of Christians one toward another, that the greatest of them should stoop to the meanest offices and expressions of good-will to their brethren ; *He*, saith our Lord, *that will be Matt. x. 44. great among you, let him be your minister ; and he that will be first of you, let him be your servant*.

10. The consideration indeed of Christ being our Lord, is in general an inducement to charity, to all sorts of charity. *We must*, saith St. Paul, walk Eph. iv. 2, 5.

SERM. XXII. *worthy of our calling, with all lowliness of mind, and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of spirit in the bond of peace; because we are members of the same body, whereof Christ is the head, and fellow-servants of the same Lord.* It is an endearing and obliging relation; it becometh us and concerneth us, being so of one family, to be courteous and gentle, kind and helpful one to another;

^{2 Cor. xiii.} ^{11.} *to maintain peace, quiet, and love one with another; it is a just duty and respect to our common Master, who loveth order and peace, who hateth confusion and dissension in his house; who is himself full of charity toward every one of his, and therefore hath enjoined it as the especial duty, hath declared it to be the most distinctive character of his servants and*

^{John xiii.} ^{15.} *followers; *Hereby*, saith he, shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

11. Particularly this consideration doth oblige us to exercise that piece of charity and of justice which consists in forbearing rash and harsh censure; which practice is not only very uncharitable and unjust toward our brethren, but it is also a wrongful and arrogant encroachment upon our Lord himself, unto whom only the right of decision in such cases doth appertain; unto whose infallible and impartial judgment both they and we are obnoxious; *Who art thou, saith St. Paul, that judgest another's servant?* (or domestic; ἀλλότριον οἰκέτην;) *to his own master he standeth or falleth:* and, *Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother?* and, *We shall all be presented before the judgment-seat of Christ:* There is, saith St. James,

^{Rom. xiv.} ^{4, 10.}

^{Jam. iv. 12.}

*one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; SERM.
who art thou that judgest another?* It is, we see, XXII.
an invading our Lord's right and authority, without most evident and reasonable cause, to censure or condemn our fellow-servants.

12. The consideration of this point our Saviour doth also improve, as an engagement to imitate himself in the practice of all virtue and piety; especially in the practice of charity, humility, and patience. It is proper for a servant to follow and attend upon his master in all places and in all performances ; to compose himself in behaviour to the manners and example, to conform himself to the garb and condition of his Lord : is it not absurd and unseemly, that the servant should be more stately, or more delicate than his master ; that he should slight those whom his master vouchsafes to respect ; that he should refuse to undertake those employments, should scorn to undergo those hardships, which his master doth willingly condescend unto ? To such purpose our Saviour discourses ; impressing by this argument on his disciples the duties of humility, charity, and patience, by him exemplified for that very end ; *Ye call me, saith he, Master, and Lord;* ^{John xiii.} *and ye say well, for so I am : if I then, your Lord* ^{13, 14, 15.} *and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet ; for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.* And having directed his disciples to the patient enduring of reproaches, affronts, and injuries put upon them, he enforces his precept by subjoining, *The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord : it is enough for the disciple to be as his master, and the servant as his* <sup>Matt. x. 24.
Luke vi. 40.
John xv. 20.</sup>

SERM. *lord*; that is, the servant in all reason ought to be
XXII. very well content, if he find such usage as his lord
 hath willingly and patiently undergone. And he
Luke xxii. thus again impresses these duties on them; *He that*
26.
Matt. xx. *is greatest among you, let him be as the younger;*
25. *and he that is chief, as he that doth serve: for*
whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he
that serveth? but I am among you as he that
serveth. Yea, St. John raiseth this consideration so
Iv. 1 John high, that he saith thus; *Because he laid down his*
iii. 16. *life for us, we also ought to lay down our lives for*
the brethren.

*Quæ est
vera liber-
tas? inno-
centia.
Epict.*

13. Finally, for our satisfaction and encouragement, we may consider, that the service of Christ is rather indeed a great freedom than a service; it is a reducement into a most desirable estate, wherein we fully enjoy that wherein liberty is defined to consist, *ἐξουσίαν αὐτοπάριαν*, power of doing whatever (as reasonable and wise men) we please ourselves to do; wherein all things are lawful to us, excepting only such things as are unprofitable to us, or hurtful. What Aristotle made the character of a just prince, (whose government doth nowise prejudice true liberty,) that he doth not in his government chiefly aim at his own profit, but his subjects' good, is perfectly true of our Lord: he is indeed capable to receive no private benefit to himself, beside satisfaction in our welfare; all his laws and commands, all his administrations and proceedings, are purely directed to our advantage. Even the statutes which
Deut. x. 13. vi. 24.
Neh. ix. 13. God gave to Israel by Moses are said to have been *commanded for their good*, not for any good that could accrue to God from their observance: much more are the laws of Christ purely such; conducing

to the health, the safety, the peace, the comfort, the joy, the happiness both of our bodies and souls ; of the present temporal life here, and of our immortal state hereafter ; *His religion is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* Well therefore might St. James call the law of Christ *a perfect law of liberty* ; well might our Saviour say, *If the Son set you free, then are ye free indeed.* What the Stoicks vaunted of themselves, the Christian modestly and truly may say, that he is the only free man ; it is this philosophy only, to which those words of Seneca may truly be applied ; *You must serve philosophy, that you may attain true liberty :* for, if to be above the reach of all considerable evil or mischief ; if to be safe from all enemies, and secure from all impressions of fortune ; if to have no reason much to fear, or much to grieve for any thing ; if not to desire things base, or things immoderate ; if to have an especial command over one's self, is (as those philosophers define it) properly liberty ; then is he most free that serves our Lord. If to be rescued from the servitude of disorderly passions and base vices is the greatest freedom, then the good Christian chiefly doth enjoy it. *A good man, saith St. Austin, although he serve, is free; a bad man, although he reign, is a slave; not of one man, but, which is*

¹ Philosophiae servias oportet, ut tibi contingat vera libertas.
Sen. Ep. 8. et 88.

Non homines timere, non fortunam; nec turpia velle, nec immodica; in se ipsum habere maximam potestatem, &c. Sen. Ep. 75.

² Bonus etianisi serviat, liber est; malus etiamsi regnet, servus est; nec unius hominis, sed quod gravius est tot dominorum, quot vitiorum. Aug. de Civ. Dei, iv. 112.

SERM. more grievous, of so many lords, as of vices. Such
 XXII. indeed is the benignity of our Lord, that he treats
 his faithful servants rather as friends than as ser-
 John xv.14. vants; *Ye are, saith he, my friends, if ye do what-*
ever I command you; I call you no more servants.
 Yea he bears to them the affection of a brother, and
 John xx.17. affords them the honour to be so styled; *Go, saith*
 i. 12. *he, after his resurrection, to Mary Magdalene, to my*
brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my
Father, and your Father; to my God, and to your
 1 John iii.1. *God: and, Ἐδεῖτε ποταπὴν ἀγάπην, See ye what love*
the Father hath given us, that we should be called
the sons of God.

Full of so many practical uses is this excellent point; the which I leave to be further deduced by your meditation.

^{1 Thess. v.} Now, *The God of peace sanctify you wholly;*
^{23.} *and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and*
body be preserved blameless unto the coming of
our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory and
praise for ever. Amen.

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost.

S E R M O N XXIII.

THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD.

MATT. i. 20.

For that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. Τὸ γεγενηθέν τῆ γυναικὶ ἐν τριάδας Ἰησοῦ ἀγίου.

WITHOUT any preface, or circumstance of speech, we observe three particulars couched in these words. 1. The incarnation of Jesus our Lord, implied by the word *τὸ γενηθέν*, *that which is conceived*, or generated. 2. The principal efficient cause of this incarnation; the Holy Ghost; by whose immediate operation, without any active influence of man, he was generated, *is of the Holy Ghost*. 3. The concurrence of the blessed Virgin Mary, as the subject of that divine virtue and operation; he was *conceived in her*. Upon each of these particulars, being all of them considerable points of that faith which we daily profess, (and especially proper subjects of our meditation at this time,) I shall reflect, observing somewhat profitable for our edification both in way of right knowledge, and in tendency to practice.

I. Our Saviour Jesus was conceived and born; that is, the only Son of God, our Lord and Redeemer, the same who *was from the beginning*, and ^{John i. 1,} &c.

SERM. did, as St. John in the entrance of his Gospel
XXIII. teacheth us, from all eternity *exist with God*, the

^{1 John i. 1.} eternal *Word of God*, by whom all things were made, was in the fulness of time conceived and born; that is, had a production agreeable to the nature of man, becoming thereby truly and really a man; which wonderful mystery is in scripture by various phrases expressed and implied; by the Word being incarnated, that is, *being made*, or becoming,

^{John i. 14.} flesh; God being manifested in the flesh; The ^{1 Tim. iii. 16.} Son of God being sent in the likeness of sinful Rom. viii. 3. flesh; partaking of flesh and blood; his taking ^{Heb. ii. 14.} the form of a servant, being made in the likeness ^{16.} Phil. ii. 7. of men, being found in fashion as a man, assuming ^{8.} John iii. 13. the seed of Abraham; his descending from heaven, ^{31. vi. 33.} 38, 50, 51, coming forth from the Father, being sent, and ^{58. iii. 17.} x. 36. xvii. coming into the world; The day-spring from on ^{18.} ^{1 John iv. 2, 3, 9.} high visiting us, eternal life being manifested; the result of what is signified by these and the like expressions, that, The blessed and glorious Person, who ^{Gal. iv. 27, 28.} Luke i. 78. before from all eternity did subsist in the form or ^{1 John i. 2.} ^{Phil. ii. 7.} nature of God, being the Son of God, one in nature ^{8.} John x. 30. with his Father, (the express image, or exact character of his substance,) did by a temporal generation truly become man, assuming human nature ^{xiv. 9.} ^{1 John v. 7.} Col. i. 15. ^{2 Cor. iv. 4.} into the unity of his Person; by a real conjunction and union thereof to the divine nature, in a manner incomprehensible and ineffable. He did, I say, ^{Heb. i. 3.} truly become man, *like unto us* in all things, as the ^{ii. 17.} apostle saith, *sin only excepted*; consisting, as such, of all the essential ingredients of our nature; endued with all our properties and faculties, subject to all passions, all infirmities, all needs, adherent or incident to our nature and condition here.

He was not only (as the Gnostics and some other heretics have conceited) in shape and outward appearance, (as a spectre, deluding men's sight and fancy,) but in most real truth, a very perfect man ; having a real body, figured and circumscribed as ours, compacted of flesh and blood, visible and tangible ; which was nourished and did grow, which needed and received sustenance, which was tender³. and sensible, frail and passible ; which was bruised with stripes, torn with scourges, pricked with thorns, pierced with nails, transfixed with a spear ; which was mortal, and underwent death by expiring its breath, and being disjoined from the soul that enlivened it. He had also a soul, endued with the same faculties as ours ; with an understanding, capable of learning and improvement ; (for he was, as man, ignorant of some things which he might know ; and *he grew*, it is said, *in wisdom and in stature* :) with a will, subject and submissive to the divine will ; (for, *Let this cup*, said he, *if it be possible,* *pass from me : but however let not my will, but thy will be done* : and, *I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me* :) several appetites, of meat, of drink, of sleep and rest ; (for we read that he was hungry, that he thirsted, that he was weary:) yea with various passions and affections, (*φυσικὰ καὶ ἀδιάβλητα πάθη*, I mean, that is, natural and irreprehensible passions;) and these of the most troublesome and afflictive sort, such as zeal, pity, sorrow ; the which were sometime declared by very pathetical significations, and are expressed in high terms ; as upon occasion of his friend Lazarus's death it is said, *He groaned in spirit and was troubled* ; he then, and upon other⁵.

SERM.
XXIII.

Vid. Athan.
in tract.
cont. Apol.
linar.

Phil. iii. 8.
*Ἐν σχήματι
ὑγείας ὡς
ἀνθρώπος.*

Rom. viii.

Mark xiii.
Luke ii. 52.
Matt. xxvi.
39.
Luke xxii.
42.
John v. 30.
Matt. xxi.
18.
John iv. 6,
7.

Matt. xvi.
John ii. 17.
Mark iii. 5.

John xi. 33.

SERM. occasions, out of pity and sorrow, did *weep*; and ye
 XXIII. know what excesses of sorrow, what anxieties and
 Ηλείαντος.
 Matt. xxvi.
 38. Αδημάντιος.
 Matt. xxvi.
 37. Ἀγρυπνία.
 Luke xxii.
 44. Τεράποντος.
 John xii.
 27. Εὐθαυμβύστο-
 θα. Mark
 xiv. 33.
 Πληραρπάσι.
 Luke xxii.
 28.
 • Heb. iv.
 15. εὐθαυμβύστο-
 θα. Mark

agonies, what tribulations, disturbances, and amazements the evangelists, using those very terms, describe him to have undergone at his passion; so that, as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh, * *We have not an high priest that could not compassionate (or sympathise with) our infirmities, but who was in all points tempted (or exercised and proved) as we are, yet without sin.*

So it appeareth, that the Son of God (co-eternal and co-essential with his Father) became the Son of man; truly and entirely partaking of the nature and substance of man, deficient in no essential part, devoid of no property belonging to us; exempt from no imperfection or inconvenience consequent upon our nature, except only sin; the which is not a natural so much as a moral evil; did not arise from man's original nature, but proceedeth from his abused will; doth rather corrupt than constitute a man.

Now concerning this great dispensation several inquiries and considerations may be made, concerning the manner of it, how therein God did assume our nature; or how therein God and man subsist united; concerning the reason of it, whence it proceeded, and why it was designed; concerning the use and influence of it, which it should have upon our practice.

1. As for the first point, the manner of this mystery, we may well, in discretion and modesty, answer

Cujusmodi sit haec
 communica-
 catio, qua
 natura hu-
 mana com-
 municatur

with the schoolman; *It is not in man to define what manner of communication this is, whereby the human nature is communicated to the Word; we cannot indeed otherwise than by negation determine,*

not otherwise than by comparison explain it. No SERM.
words perhaps, which we do use to signify our con- XXIII.
ceptions about these material and inferior things, Verbo, non
will perfectly and adequately suit to a mystery so definire.
A lens.
much remote from the common objects of our know-
ledge, so far transcending our capacity; to affirm
positively, that this wonderful incarnation did come
to pass, that this incomprehensible and ineffable
union doth persist in this or that manner, may be
rash and dangerous; it would cease to be admirable,
if we could fully conceive or express it: but this
justly and safely we may assert, that whatever man-
ner of conception or expression about it doth plainly
derogate from the divine perfections, or is irrecon-
cilably repugnant to the nature of things, or dis-
agreeth with the tenor of revealed truths evidently
connected unto or depending on this mystery; or
which (either directly and immediately, or obliquely
and by manifest consequence) doth contradict the
language and doctrine of the holy scriptures, is to
be rejected by us: whence we may for exclusion of
errors and mistakes about this point, with the holy
Fathers, and particularly with the great council of
Chalcedon, assert, that in the incarnation of our Syn. Chalc.
Lord the two natures, divine and human, were ^{Act v. (fin.)}_(pag. 340.)
united ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως.

1. The natures were, I say, united ἀσυγχύτως, that
is, without any confusion or commixtion; for such
a way of blending would induce a third nature
different from both, such as resulteth from the com-
position and temperation of the elements into a
mixed body; such a commixtion being supposed,
our Lord would be neither God nor man, but another
third kind of substance, such as must not without

SERM. any ground or authority be supposed ; that would
XXIII. destroy, diminish, or alter the properties of each ;
 which is unsound to say, and impossible to be ; for
 the divine nature is not capable of any diminution
 or alteration : wherefore both natures in this mys-
 tery do subsist entire, distinct, and unconfused, each
 retaining its essential and natural properties.

2. The incarnation was performed *ἀτρέπτως*, that
 is, without conversion or transmutation of one nature
 into another : the divinity could not be turned into
 humanity ; for how could God, (the eternal, self-sub-
 sistent, most simple, and immutable Jehovah,) as
 such, be anywise changed or made, become infirm
 and passive, consist of body and soul, suffer and die ?
 Nor could the humanity be turned into divinity ; for
 how could that which did not subsist at all before
 the incarnation be therein converted into another
 thing ? why should our Saviour ever be called man,
 when his humanity was by translation into divinity
 destroyed ? why is it said, *the Word was made flesh*,
 if the flesh was changed into the Word ? to omit,
 how impossible it is, that one substance should be
 transmuted into another, especially a corporeal into
 a spiritual, a finite into an infinite ; to omit likewise
 the many dangerous consequences of this position,
 and its inconsistency with many principal and plain
 doctrines of our religion, particularly the real passion
 and death of our Lord, which could not be incident
 to him otherwise than as retaining the true nature
 of man.

3. The natures were also joined *ἀδιαπέτως*, undivid-
 edly ; that is, so as they have not distinct subsist-
 ences, or do not constitute two persons : for there
 is but one Christ, one Person, to whom being

God and being man are truly and properly attributed.

SERM.
XXIII.

4. We must also understand the natures to be united ἀχωρίστως, inseparably ; so that they never are severed, the union is never dissolved ; the same person never ceasing to be both God and man; not even then, when our Lord, as man, did undergo death ; for he raised himself from the dead, he reared the temple of his own body, being fallen : as being God, he was able to raise himself ; as being man, he was capable to be raised by himself ; the union between God and man persisting, when the union between human body and soul was dissolved.

We might add, in further exclusion of erroneous conceits, that this mysterious union was not made κατὰ παράστασιν, *by assistance*, or close presence only, nor κατ’ ἐνοίκησιν, merely *by inhabituation*, nor κατὰ σχέσιν, *by relation*, nor κατ’ ἀξίαν, *by estimation*, nor καθ’ ἀρμοίαν, *by conformity*, in will and practice, nor κατὰ ταυτοβουλίαν, *by consent* ; as Nestorius and other heterodox dogmatists anciently, in opposition to the catholic exposition of this mystery, did imagine : but it doth not seem worth the while to discuss those antiquated conceits, or with more subtlety to intrigue the point.

As for illustration of it by comparison, I shall only (passing over divers more wide and improper resemblances ; such as those of Bellarmine, the union of a man's arm to his body, the incision of a bough into a tree, and the like) observe, that nature doth afford us one similitude very apposite for explication of this mysterious union ; which is the union of a man's soul and body, whereby he becometh one person. The soul and body are two substances, very

Salmeron.
apud Ge-
rard. in loc.
Exeget. p.
441. Bel.

SERM. different in kind, in properties, in dignity : the one of itself material, extended, divisible, passive and corruptible, lifeless and senseless ; the other immaterial, indivisible, incorruptible, self-moving, endued with life, knowledge, passion : both of them are also capable of separate existence, or of subsistence by themselves ; yet are these two, although in a manner difficult for us to conceive or comprehend, closely united together, and do concur to the making up a man ; and that so as to remain still in substance distinct, each retaining its natural properties, without any confusion, or any conversion of one into the other ; so also that from them the same man receiveth the denominations of corporeal and spiritual, of mortal and immortal : in a like manner (although in a degree more admirable and incomprehensible) are the divine and human natures conjoined in our Lord ; for, as we hear in the Athanasian Creed, *As the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ.* So much for the manner.

2. As for the reason why the Son of God did assume our nature ; the chiefest and clearest reason thereof was, God's design thereby to exercise and demonstrate his immense goodness, mercy, and pity

John iii. 16. toward us ; So God loved the world, that he gave

*1 John iv. his only begotten Son : In this the love of God was
9. manifested, that God sent his only begotten Son
Rom. v. 8. viii. 32. into the world, that we might live by him : Through
Διὰ σελαῖς Χριστοῦ the tender mercy of our God, the day-spring from
Εἰσῶν.*

Luke i. 78. Tit. iii. 4. on high did visit us : it was χρηστότης καὶ φιλανθρωπία, the benignity and philanthropy of God, which induced him to engage his Son upon such a debasement and exinanition of himself, that we thereby might be raised to a capacity of salvation.

If we further desire to contemplate the wisdom of S E R M. God in this admirable proceeding, and to know why XXIII. God, among other means and methods alike (for all we can know) possible to him, did choose in this way to transact our redemption; it may be answered, that it becometh us rather to adore the depth of God's wisdom herein, than to sound it, or to hope by searching to reach the bottom of it: yet some congruities of this method to the reason and exigency of things are in the scripture intimated to us, and in some manner are discernible by us, sufficient to recommend the divine wisdom therein to our admiration; reasons may be assigned why our Redeemer should be Θεάνθρωπος, why God, why man^f. It well became God to stoop down thus, that, as his goodness toward us was infinite, so the demonstrations thereof, to his glory and our benefit, should be answerably such; which perhaps could not otherwise be, than by such a condescension: as a prince could not make any other so great attestation of favour to his vassal, as by descending from his throne, laying aside his majesty, putting himself into a like condition, conversing freely with him, subjecting himself to the same laws and duties, enduring the like hardships and inconveniences with him.

It was expedient that our Redeemer should be "Εντελέχεις δημιουργός." God, that he might be able by his power to save us; to remove those huge obstacles that crossed our salvation, to subdue those potent enemies which opposed it; to command and conquer nature, to vanquish the powers of hell, to abolish death in our behalf.

It was requisite that he should be the coessential,

^eNisi enim esset verus Deus, non adserret remedium; nisi esset homo verus, non præberet exemplum. *Leo M. de Nat. Serm. i.*

SER.M. natural Son of God, that by the nearness of his relation to God, by the supereminent dignity of his person, by the immense value of his merit, he might conciliate God's favour to us, fully appease his wrath incensed against us, and satisfy his justice abused by our offences.

It was convenient, that his doctrine should carry with it the highest certainty and strongest efficacy; that his example should challenge the greatest regard and strictest imitation; that his laws should have supreme authority, and with greatest advantage oblige us: fit therefore it was, that he should be God, and have the character of divinity stamped upon what he said and performed.

The redemption and salvation of man did import an honour too august for any creature to be dignified with; it was a work too difficult and mighty for any but God to achieve; it was not proper that any creature should be principal in managing an affair of such height and importance: needful and expedient therefore it was, that our Saviour should be God.

It was also requisite, upon many accounts, that he should be man: that by perfectly obeying God's commands, and submitting patiently to God's will, as man, he might procure God's favour toward man; that as man had deeply wronged and offended God, so man also should highly content and please him;

Rom. v. 19, in St. Paul's language, that *as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners*, (that is, were condemned and exposed to death, upon God's just displeasure for that one man's transgression, backed with the like in his posterity,) *so by the obedience of one man many should be made righteous*, (that is, all who would imitate his obedience should be ab-

solved from guilt, exempted from punishment, and SERM. received into grace; God being well pleased with XXIII. and reconciled to mankind, especially to his followers, in regard to that man's dutiful observance of his will ^{ε.}) Decent it was, that as man did approve, so man also should *condemn sin in the flesh*; that as Rom. viii. 3. man by wilful self-pleasing did incur misery, so by ^{That he might taste death for man.} Heb. "Επεπεικε, * It did, as the apostle saith, *become him*, ^{ii. 9.} Col. i. 22. *for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering.* ^{* Heb. ii. 10.}

It was also fit, that he who was designed to intercede for our welfare, to propitiate for our faults, to succour and relieve our distresses, should be tender of our good, and sensible of our needs; that he therefore should by nature and experience be disposed συμπαθεῖν, to *compassionate our infirmities, and μετριωπαθεῖν, to be gently affected toward us,* in respect of our ignorances and errors; whence ὁφειλε, he, saith the divine apostle again, according to the design appointed to him, and undertaken by him, ought, or *it did behove him to be in all things like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God;* that he might propitiate for the sins of the people; for in that he hath himself suffered being tempted, he is also able to succour those that are tempted.

As the Devil did overbear man—
Eve advo-
cata. Iren.
Heb. iv. 15.
v. 2.

Heb. ii. 17.
Ἄνθρωπος φίλος σώμα τὸν λόχυν. Θίσις γηράς ταῦθιν εἰς οὐδέποτε.
Procl. in Conc. Eph. pag. 5.

^ε He by his humanity did unite mankind in fraternity.

Τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ καταργήσας. Eph. ii. 15.

"Οτι μέλη ἐσμὲν τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ, ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ψυχῶν αὐτοῦ. Eph. v. 30.

SERM.
XXIII.

He was to be man also, for that by appearing in human shape, visible and audible, familiar and agreeable to us, he was qualified for that great design of declaring God's will and intentions toward us in a more easy, less amazing, and more obliging way, than otherwise could have been: for that hence likewise he could, with more advantage, describe an exact copy of righteousness for us to transcribe; shewing us exemplarily how as men we should behave ourselves; how we should moderate our sensual appetites, how govern our passions, how order and employ all the powers of our soul and members of our body; how pass through all conditions, and entertain all events befalling us; it not being indeed otherwise possible, that so lively and suitable a pattern of transcendent charity, meekness, humility, and patience, could have been exhibited to us.

Acts xvii.
31. x. 42.

Fit it also was, that he who was to be appointed our judge, substitute of the supreme Judge invisible, should be, as God, (of perfect wisdom, and so able to discern all matters of fact, to distinguish all points of right; of perfect rectitude, so as never willingly to discost from truth and equity,) so also man; visible and audible to us, without surprising astonishment and terror; apt to screen us from the insupportable presence of God; endued with a natural tenderness of good-will and compassion toward us, disposed to temper needful severity with competent mildness.

'Αντιπρό-

λαστήρα.

Eph. i. 10.

καὶ ἀποστ-

αλλάζειν.

Col. i. 20.

Tim. ii. 5.

In fine, it was most congruous, that he who was designed to *recapitulate and reconcile*, as St. Paul speaketh, *all things in heaven and earth*, to be the great *mediator and peacemaker* between God and

in, for the repairing God's honour and dispensing SER.M. grace, for the *purchasing our peace* and XXIII. bringing our salvation, that he should be most nearly allied unto both parties ; that consequently, if possible, (and what is to God, the author of this economy, impossible ?) he should be both God and man ; son to God, and brother to us ; the same in nature than God, in kind with us. Such reason and wisdom is discernible in this dispensation.

III. Now for the practical use of this doctrine, or it is not a doctrine merely speculative, and barren of fruit, or practical use :) it should, first, have powerful influence upon our minds, causing us, th high degrees of love and gratitude, to adore the infinite goodness of that God, who hath been pleased himself to stoop so low, that he might advance us from the lowest depth of meanness and baseness, to the highest pitch of honour and happiness that we are capable of : what words can express, what thought can apprehend a favour so conceivable and ineffable ? Well might St. Paul tell it *ἰπερβάλλοντας τῆς γνώσεως ἀγάπην*, *love trans- Eph. iii. 19.* *riding all knowledge*: well may heaven admire, d earth be astonished, and hell tremble at the disclosure of such a mystery, at the accomplishing such miracle of grace and mercy ; that the sovereign majesty of heaven, the eternal Lord of glory, the world's great Maker, the only Son of God, and heir of all things, should become a poor, small, weak, and ill man ; should dwell in a tabernacle of flesh ; should converse with silly, wretched, and frail mortals here ; should be exposed to want, disgrace, and in : ὃ βάθος, O depth of goodness and mercy unsearchable ! if this will not, what consideration can

SER.M. raise us, what benefit can affect us? what prodigious XXIII. ingratitudo will it be, to be regardless or insensible of kindness so wonderful?

2. Another great use of this point is to engage us, as universally to all obedience, so particularly to the duties of humility, of patience, and of charity. Did the Son of God thus willingly submit, and so abase himself; and shall we then be refractory, shall we exalt ourselves; shall we refuse any appointment, or repine at any proceeding of God? Did he from the highest pitch of glory supercelestial voluntarily descend into this gloomy region and state of ignoble obscurity; did he, abandoning immense wealth, freely embrace extreme poverty; did he gladly sequester himself from those ineffable joys above, to converse with sorrow and sadness here, in this valley of tears, for God's sake, and ours; and shall we be unwilling to do any thing for God's sake, or to part with any thing for him? To these purposes doth St. Paul

Phil. ii. 6, apply the consideration of this point; *Let, saith he,*
7, 8. *the same mind* (the same humble, patient, meek, charitable mind) *be in you, which was in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God—emptied himself, taking upon him the form of a servant; being made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death:* it was the greatest argument and instance of humility, patience, and charity, that could be, for him, that did exist in the form of God, thus to debase himself, to partake of our nature,

Vid. 1 John and submit to our state: and, *Know, saith that*
iv. 10, 1. *apostle again, the grace (or graciousness) of our*
^{2 Cor. viii. 9.} *Lord Jesus Christ, that being himself rich, for your sake he became poor,* (being rich as God, and

Lord of all things, he put himself into this mean S.E.R.M.
and poor condition of man,) *that ye, through his XXIII.*
poverty, might be rich: it was a consideration
surely most proper to his purpose of inciting unto
charity^b.

3. The consideration of this point should raise our minds to a sense of the dignity of our nature, accompanied with dispositions of heart and deportments of life answerable thereto: by our Lord's incarnation our nature is so advanced, that we become nearly allied to God, of the blood-royal of heaven, in this respect overtopping all the creation of God; so that hereby, as the Apostle to the Hebrews discourses, that of the Psalmist was verified concerning man; *Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over the works of thine hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:* the angels themselves cannot boast of such an honour; for *he took not the nature of angels, but he took the seed of Abraham:* being therefore so highly dignified, we should have a mind suitably great and noble, loving, delighting in, aiming at the most excellent things, void of base cares, of sordid desires, of unworthy designs; we should, in all our conversation, demean ourselves worthily and decently, like the brethren of Jesus and children of Godⁱ; that we may not disparage and disgrace this illustrious alliance. As our Lord did vouchsafe, in most commendative grace, to resemble us, so should we, with

^b Εορτάζομεν ἐπιδημίαν Θεοῦ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους, ἵνα πρὸς Θεὸν ἐκδημήσωμεν, ἢ ἐπαιέλθωμεν. Naz. Orat. 38.

ⁱ Agnosce, Christiane, dignitatem tuam, et divinæ consors facultus naturæ, noli in veterem vilitatem degeneri conversatione recidere. *Leo de Nat. Serm. i.*

SERM. a generous and honest ambition, aspire to resemble him ; as he stooped to humanity, so let us rear ourselves to a kind of divinity, in purity of mind and sanctity of life ; so St. Gregory Nazianzen exhorteth ; ^k *Let us, saith he, be as Christ, since Christ is become like us : let us, for his sake, be gods, seeing he is become man for us.*

4. The consideration of this point should fill our hearts with spiritual comfort and joy ; there never can be a greater occasion or juster cause of rejoicing than this, that our Lord is born and come : it is signally *evangelium, good tidings* ; never news more welcome hath come into the world ; never report more grateful was heard by mortal ears : it is news from heaven, and the best that ever came thence ; *Luke ii. 10.* Behold, (said the angel that brought it, and a message it was most worthy the mouth of an angel,) *I tell good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people* ; news, at which all heaven was pleased and ravished with joy, breaking presently forth into *Luke ii. 13.* hymns of praise and congratulation ; *There was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, and good-will to men.* In this, if we mark it, all the grand causes of extraordinary joy and festivity do conspire.

Is the birth of a prince ever by honest subjects entertained and celebrated with joy ? Behold a Prince born to all the world ; a Prince that cometh to rule mankind with perfect equity and clemency ; to bring with him all peace and prosperity ; to achieve the most noble exploits that could be undertaken in our

^k Γενόμεθα ὡς Χριστὸς, ἐπεὶ καὶ Χριστὸς ὡς ἡμεῖς. Γενόμεθα θεοὶ δὲ αὐτὸν, ἐπειδὲν κἀκεῖνος δι' ἡμᾶς ἀνθρώπος. Greg. Naz. Orat. 41.

behalf, to protect us in most assured safety, to defend SERM.
us from all evil, to subdue and destroy all the ene- XXIII.
mies of our welfare, to rescue us from the greatest
slaveries and miseries, to settle us in perfect happi-
ness ; he bringeth *salvation from our enemies, and* ^{Luke i. 71.}
*from the hands of all that hate us ; so that being*¹⁴
delivered from the hands of our enemies, we might
serve him without fear in holiness and righteous-
ness before him all the days of our lives.

Is victory glorious and joyful ? See the invincible ^{Rev. vi. 2.}
warrior is issued forth into the field, *conquering and* ^{Luke xi. 23.}
to conquer ; he that shall quell, disarm, and rifle the³³
strong one, that shall rout all the forces of hell, that
shall defeat sin, and slay death itself, that shall sub-
due the world, and subject all things to himself : the
Captain of our salvation appeareth, triumphing in
humility ; the great blow is given ; the Devil's pride
and envy are abased ; all the enemies are amazed,
are daunted, are confounded at his presence ; they
cannot stand, they break, they scatter, they flee be-
fore him.

Is the publishing of peace acceptable ? Behold
eternal peace between heaven and earth, a general
peace among men, a peace of conscience between
man and himself, is now established and proclaimed :
the illustrious ambassador, the noble hostage, the in-
fallible pledge thereof is arrived : *preaching peace* ^{Eph. ii. 17.}
to them that are far off, and to them that are ^{Acts x. 36.}
near.

Is recovery of liberty comfortable unto slaves and
captives ? Behold the Redeemer is come, the great
ransom is laid down sufficient to purchase the free-
dom of whole worlds : innocence appearing in human
nature hath unlocked the prison of sin, in which we

SERM. were closely detained ; hath broken the shackles of
XXIII. universal guilt, which sorely pinched mankind : he
Gal. iii. 22. is come, who is anointed to preach (*αὐχμαλάτοις ἀφε-*
Luke iv. 18. *σιν*) *dismission to the captives.*

Is the coming of a good friend to be congratulated ? Behold, the best friend to all mankind (bringing with him most wholesome advice, most needful succour, most seasonable consolation) is arrived to visit us, and dwell with us.

Is it a comfortable thing to be graced with honour ? What greater honour could mankind be dignified with, than this of receiving the Son of God into his kind and kindred ? What could more advance and adorn us, than this high relation ?

Is mirth seasonable to the day of marriage ? Behold heaven and earth this day are coupled, divinity is espoused to humanity, an eternal indissoluble knot of amity, of unity, is tied between God and man ; the great Bridegroom is come forth clad in his nuptial garment of flesh, ready to wed the church, his beloved spouse¹.

Is the sun's rising (after a long, dark, and cold night) cheerful and comfortable ? See, the *Sun of righteousness is risen, with healing in his wings* ; dispensing all about his most pleasant light, and salutary influences ; *The dayspring from on high hath visited us*, diffusing an universal light upon the souls of men, dispelling the night of ignorance and error, *shining out to those that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and guiding our feet*

¹ In natali Domini quasi in nuptiis spiritualibus sponsæ suæ ecclesiæ Christus adjunctus est, tunc processit sponsus de thalamo suo, hoc est verbum Dei de utero virginali. *Aug. de Temp. Serm. ii.*

*the way of peace: Arise, shine, for thy light SERM.
come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon* XXIII.

e, &c. Never did heaven with so clear and serene Isa. lx. 1.

countenance smile upon earth, as it did this day, en this super-illustrious luminary (this *bright* Rev. xxii. 16. *rning star*, as he is called in the Apocalypse) ^{Aoring λαμπτής καὶ ἡ}

spring up above our horizon. From this auspicious day commenced the revocation of that fatal curse, by which we were exiled from paradise, condemned to death, exposed to hell; the reinstating in a condition of hope, in a capacity of happiness;

return of life and joy into this region of corruption and disconsolateness: this is the day, which *all nations desired*, and earnestly longed for, (with an explicit sense;) which the good patriarchs foreseeing rejoice; which the prophets in so magnificent signs did predict and presignify. In our Lord's nativity all mankind was in a manner born, or did die; was restored from a manifold necessity of living; from lying dead in the guilt, and under the power of sin; from having our bodies irrecoverably solved by corruption, and our souls immersed into

the *second death* of endless misery. It is in effect before the world's nativity that we celebrate, annexed to that of our Lord; the beginning of the new, better, spiritual, and eternal life to men: all son therefore we have upon this consideration heartily to rejoice; how extremely stupid and senseless are we, if the apprehension of goods so many, excellent, hence accruing to us, doth not inspire our hearts with a grateful cheerfulness! *This is the Ps. cxviii. joy which the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad therein.*

Conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the
Virgin Mary.

S E R M O N XXIV.

THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD.

MATT. i. 20.

Tὸν γένεται
αὐτὴν γίνεσθαι
θέλει.
For that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost.

SER.M.
XXIV.

IF every circumstance of our Lord's wonderful incarnation deserveth to be considered, as affording matter of good instruction, and serving to excite devout affection ; then surely the principal causes and ingredients thereof may demand a special regard from us ; such are those which are couched in this text ; the efficiency of the Holy Spirit, by which it was accomplished ; the concurrence of the blessed Virgin Mary, as the subject, in whom the divine virtue did work it : upon which two particulars we shall reflect, in order.

I. It was the *Holy Ghost*, by the singular virtue and operation of whom, without intervention of any man, or earthly father, the blessed Virgin became Luke iii. 23. impregnated and did conceive. Joseph was, ὡς ἐνομί-
Matt. xiii. 55. ζέτο, in outward esteem, the father of our Saviour,
John vi. 42. (for, *Is not this*, said they, *the carpenter's son ? Is*
Luke iv. 22. *not this the son of Joseph ?*) the modesty of his
Mark vi. 3. holy mother being preserved from misprision under

the shroud of wedlock, during the time that by God's S E R M. order the mystery and truth of things was to be concealed from general notice, *until the day of his being shewed and manifested to Israel*; but God only was in truth his Father, his incarnation being performed by the miraculous efficacy of God's holy Spirit; upon which account (beside his eternal generation) he was also the Son of God; or, *Therefore*, said the angel to his mother, *that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.*

XXIV.

Luke i. 80.
John i. 31.

Luke i. 35.

The matter of fact was well known to Joseph by revelation, and to the blessed Virgin herself by her conscience also; and by them it was attested to the holy apostles; their attestation being seconded by the miracles of our Lord, together with all the potent arguments which confirm his doctrine: nor do we find, that even the adversaries of our Lord did ever offer to impeach his parents of imposture, or did anywise trouble them about this report coming from them. And it is so clearly and fully affirmed in the Gospels, that it is prodigiously strange that *Apud Epicopium—* here have been lately some (called Josephites) who have questioned it, upon weak pretences of discourse; whom we cannot otherwise consider, than as intolerably audacious perverters of scripture, or subverters of its authority and use; for surely nothing there can be deemed certain, if this point is not. The fact therefore we must take for granted; and, for our further instruction about it, we shall consider three particulars; the *manner* of it, the *reasons* for it, the *practical use* whereto it may be applied.

1. The manner of that operation, whereby the Holy Ghost did effect the human generation of our

SER M. Lord, is by the archangel Gabriel expressed to be
 XXIV. from the *supervention of the Holy Ghost, and the*
^{Luke i. 35. διερχεσθεντος την περιπολην} *divine power overshadowing the blessed Virgin;*
 the which words being of so general interpretation,
 and as to precise meaning so little intelligible by us,
 may well serve to bound our curiosity, and to check
 further inquiry. Some indeed (as the followers of
 Valentinus and Apollinarius, of old; as Menno, Ser-
 vetus, and others, of late) have been so bold, as to
 determine, that the Holy Ghost did bring from hea-
 ven a body, which he did convey into the blessed
 Virgin; or that our Saviour's flesh was formed of a
 divine seed, from the substance of God himself; or
 that in his conception the Holy Ghost did create
 and impart somewhat of matter; but it is enough to
 say, that these are rash and groundless conceits; the
 holy Fathers, having weighed and discussed such
 imaginations, to prevent dangerous or misbecoming
 thoughts and speeches, about a point of so sacred
 nature, more soberly do teach, that our Saviour was

Damasc. iii. conceived by the Holy Spirit, not *σπερματικῶς, semi-*
^{2.} *nally;* but *δημιουργικῶς, operatively;* οὐ διὰ συνουσίας,
 Just. Mart. *not by copulation;* but διὰ δυνάμεως, *by power;* not
 Apol. 2. *de substantia Spiritus Sancti, of the substance of*
 Aug. de *the Holy Ghost;* but *de potentia, by the virtue of*
 Temp. *it;* and further than this, say they, *Generationem*
 Serm. vi. *eius quis enarrabit? Who can declare his genera-*
 P. Leo de *tion, or exactly describe the manner of a performance*
 Nat. Serm. *so very wonderful and sublime; to the which no ex-*
perience doth furnish any event like or comparable? When therefore it is said, that the conception, or ge-
 neration, was ἐκ Πνεύματος ἄγιον, *of the Holy Ghost,* the preposition *ἐκ* is to be taken for the same with
ὑπὸ, or *διὰ*, (as it is very commonly used,) denoting,

not matter out of which, but efficiency by which the S E R M.
effect was derived. But, XXIV.

2. Why was our Saviour conceived by the Holy Ghost? Divers reasons for it may be assigned.

1. It was needful for assuring the divinity of our Saviour, or his being the eternal Son of God. That the Messias, the Redeemer of the world, should be the Son of God, was necessary, according to the purpose of God, the ancient predictions, the general opinions and expectations of God's people, (often implied in the Gospels;) accordingly such he was as the coeternal Word in his divine nature; but it was requisite that he should also be such according to his human nature; that by his extraordinary generation, as man, his other more sublime generation (so much transcending human conceit) might be more credible, and the world might be convinced of his divinity; for men hardly would have been capable to believe him more than a man, whom they saw born in the common way of men: *Is not this the son of Joseph?* was an argument which they urged against him, when he spake about his *descent from heaven*, John vi. 42. and caused them to admire, when they observed the power of his miracles (Matt. xiii. 55.) and the wisdom of his discourse, (Luke iv. 22.) but easily might they be induced to admit a mystery, which was countenanced by so grand a miracle, as the birth of a child, by the divine power, without a father.

2. This was the most fit way of accomplishing that so necessary conjunction of the divine and human nature: a work of such grandeur and glory, of such grace and goodness, was not to be achieved by any other agent than by him, who is the substantial

Psal. ii. 7.

^{12.} 1 Chron.

^{1.} xxii. 10.

^{2.} Sam. vii.

^{13.} Ps. lxxx.

^{27.} John i. 34,

^{49.} xi. 27.

^{vi.} 69.

Matt. xvi.

^{16.} Mark xiv.

^{61.} xxvi. 63.

Matt. viii.

^{29.} Mark i. 24.

Luke iv. 34.

SERM. virtue and love of God ; by whom we see all extraordinary and most eminent works to have been managed, to whom commonly the *μεγαλεῖα Θεοῦ*, the majestic and magnificent things of God are ascribed; for in the creation of the world, it was *the Spirit of God* which moved upon the waters, forming things, and impregnating them with all kinds of life and vigour natural; he it is, to whom those signal works of Providence, the revelation of divine truth, the prediction of future events, the performance of miracles, the renovation of men's minds, and reformation of their manners, in a peculiar manner are attributed; so likewise to him this incomparably supernatural, glorious, and important act was most properly due.

3. It being necessary that our Saviour should be consecrated to his great functions, and perfectly sanctified in his person, as man ; and those performances (according to the mystical economy of things among the divine Persons) being appropriated to the Holy Ghost, the natural spring of all derived sanctity ; his efficacy must needs intervene to this purpose : if Jeremiah, St. John Baptist, and St. Paul, (persons designed for offices and employments in dignity, in consequence so far inferior,) were sanctified, and separated by the Holy Ghost from their mother's womb ; in how more excellent kind and degree was it requisite that he should be sanctified thereby, who was sent into the world to redeem and purify it from all filth and fault ? According to that saying of our Lord, *Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?* whereas the style of Gods was given to persons devoted to far meaner services.

Jer. i. 5.
Luke i. 15.
Gal. i. 15.
John x. 36.

4. It was needful, that the human nature, which SER M.
God did vouchsafe so highly to advance, by assum- XXIV.
ing it to a personal conjunction and union with him. Futurum
hominum
Salvatorem
talis ortus
decebat,
qui et in se
haberet hu-
mane sub-
stantiae na-
turam, et
humane
carnis in-
quina-
menta ne-
sciret.
*Leo i. de
Nativ.
Ser. 2.*
self, should be clear from all stain and pollution ; such as in ordinary propagation doth adhere to our *sinful flesh* and corrupt nature ; that he whom God even as man would so dearly love, and so entirely be pleased with, should be void of the least inclination to iniquity or impurity ; for, as the Psalmist telleth us, *God is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him* ; he is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot so much as look upon iniquity ; how then would he receive any defiled thing into so near an union, into so dear a regard, into so full a complacence ? He therefore was to be thoroughly sanctified ; and thence it was needful that his humanity should issue from the fountain of holiness, God's most holy Spirit.

5. It in like manner was necessary, that he who was ordained to appease God's displeasure, and fully to reconcile him toward us, to expiate all our offences, thoroughly to redeem mankind from the guilt and from the power of sin ; who with absolute authority was to teach, to exemplify, to command all righteousness, should himself know no sin : Such an High ^{2 Cor. v. 21.} Priest, as the apostle saith, became us, who was ^{Heb. vii. 26,} holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners ; who had no need first to offer up sacrifices for his own sins : the sacrifice expiatory for our offences was to be a lamb without blemish and without spot : ^{1 Pet. i. 19.} whence he was to be fully sanctified ; and to become τὸ ἅγιον, that holy thing, (absolutely,) as he was ^{Luke i. 35.} termed by the celestial messenger : whence from the source of sanctity, the Holy Ghost, whose proper

SER M. name doth import holiness, whose proper work it is
XXIV. to sanctify, he was to derive a perfect sanctity and purity in his sacred conception.

6. We may add, as an observable point, the analogy, or apposite resemblance thereof, between the Gal. iv. 19. conception of our Saviour for us, and his *formation in us*; his natural generation and the spiritual regeneration of Christians; his becoming our brother in the flesh, and our being made his brethren in the Spirit; both being effected by the same agent: as Christ was made true man, and partaker of our nature, so we become true Christians, *and consorts of the divine nature*, by the operation of the same divine Spirit: as he by the dispensation of God, so we by his grace *are born, not by blood, nor by the will of flesh, nor by the will of man, but of God*; hence doth accrue a new relation, and we become his brethren, not only as he was made like to us, but also ^{1 Pet. i. 23.} as we become like to him; and are *begotten of God*, by the same heavenly virtue, the same *incorruptible seed*.

It may indeed be an admonition to us, to labour after this spiritual conception, which will render us conformable to our Lord, and far more truly allied to him, than even his partaking our nature hath done; and indeed without that spiritual one, this carnal alliance will not signify any thing of benefit to us; it will little profit us, that he was born in ^{2 Cor. v. 16.} the flesh, if we are not *born of the Spirit*; without which generation *we cannot enter into the kingdom of God*.

3. The proper application of this point is to engage us on a thankful adoration of the divine goodness and wisdom; so fully, so fitly carrying on that

infinitely gracious work of our redemption ; all the SERM. divine Persons of the blessed Trinity in a particular manner conspiring, as in the designation, so in the execution thereof ; the Father mercifully destinating and sending his Son ; the Son willingly and gladly condescending to come ; the Holy Ghost effectually bringing him into the world ; to which blessed Trinity therefore we should render all humble reverence and hearty praise : and so much for the first particular observed in the text.

II. The next is, the concurrence of the blessed Virgin Mary to our Lord's generation ; *that which* ^{τὸν ἀνθρώπον} _{γεννήθη} *is conceived* (or generated) *in her*.

The being generated (*τὸ γεννῶσθαι*, here) we may suppose to respect or to express his whole human generation, with the parts and progress thereof; implying on the Virgin's part all that she as a mother did confer thereto; wherein therefore are comprehended the following particulars :

1. His conception of her substance, whence he is called *the fruit of her womb*; and *a rod* (that is, a branch, or twig) *sprouting from the stem of Jesse*; <sup>Luke i. 42.
Isa. xi. 1.</sup> and, *Behold, said the angel, thou shalt conceive in* ^{γένεσι} _{Luke i. 31.} *thy womb.*

2. The nutrition, accretion, and entire conformation of his body, out of her blood and substance ; whence her womb is said to bear him, (*Blessed is the womb that bare thee*,) to have been *gravidated*, <sup>Luke xi. 27.
τύκνει.</sup> _{Luke ii. 5.} or *great with child* ; the which as it grew did swell <sup>Matt. i. 18.
εὐρίσθη</sup> her womb visibly ; so that *she was found, or observed, by apparent signs, to be with child of him,* ^{γένεσις εἰδούσα.} or to have him in her womb.

3. His nativity itself, or exclusion into the open world ; which is thus expressed by the evangelist :

SERM. *The days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her firstborn son.*
XXIV.
 Luke ii. 6, 7.

Whatever therefore any mother doth confer to the entire production of a child, is to be attributed to the blessed Virgin ; whence she was truly and properly *the mother of our Lord*, and is accordingly often so called in the Gospels ; whence also she hath been in the church defined to be and commonly styled θεοτόκος, the bearer and mother of God ; that is, of him who is God ; that term asserting the divinity of Christ and the unity of his person, [against Nestorius and his partisans ; who said, that the Virgin was not properly θεοτόκος, but χριστοτόκος ; and that he who was born, was not God, but ἀνθρώπος θεοφόρος, a man carrying God, or divinity, in him.]

Nest. ad
Cyrill. in.
Conc. Eph.

Cyrill.
Epist. ad
Nest.

Now for our instruction and use we may resolve the word *her* into three respects distinctly considerable ; he was born of her, a Woman ; he was born of her, a Virgin ; he was born of her, Mary ; each of which respects is pregnant with matter observable : he was born of a Woman, that was highly needful to be ; of a Virgin, that was very requisite ; of Mary, that doth involve divers circumstances of importance.

1. Our Saviour was born of a woman.

The Valentinian heretics of old did opine, that he was only born through a woman, or did merely pass through her, as liquor doth pass through a vessel ; but that is a great error ; for he was born in her, and of her ; in our text it is ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν, *generated in her* ; which in sound expresseth no more, than her containing him when conceived, but according to the force of the Hebrew particle בְ (be) answering to ἐν

here, is apt to signify more; and must be taken to do SERM. so in conformity to parallel expressions; as that of XXIV. St. Paul, *God sent forth his Son born ἐκ γυναικὸς, of Gal. iv. 4. a woman;* and that of St. Luke (in the best copies, followed by our English translators) τὸ γεννώμενον ἐκ σου, *The holy thing that is born of thee, or out Luke i. 35. of thee.*

Indeed of a woman he was born, that is, from the matter and substance of a woman: so as thereby to bear the relation of a kinsman to us, becoming consanguineous to all mankind, which *God did make* ^{Acts xvii.} *of one blood;* whence *he is not ashamed to call us* ^{26.} ^{Heb. ii.} *brethren,* [and alloweth us to be *of his flesh and of* ^{Eph. v. 30.} *his bones.]*

We may easily conceive that God could immediately have created a nature in kind and properties like to ours, and have assumed it; but that would not have so fitly served the design of reconciling himself to us, and redeeming us; to the effecting that in the most congruous way, not only a resemblance in nature, but a cognation and proximity in blood was needful, or at least was very convenient and suitable: for our blood being tainted, our whole stock having forfeited its dignity and estate by the rebellious disloyalty of our common ancestors, it was expedient that it should be purged and restored by the satisfactory merit and acceptable fidelity of one, who was of our race and kindred. We being to be adopted and received into God's family, it was proper that business should be transacted by intervention of a common relation; according to the discourse of St. Paul, *God sent forth his Son, born of a woman,* ^{Gal. iv. 4.} *born under the law, that he might redeem those* ^{5.} *that were under the law,* (that according to the ob-

SER.M. ligation undertaken by him, he performing the obedience required by the law, might redeem those who, being tied to obey the law, had yet transgressed it,) *ἵνα τὴν πιστείαν ἀπολάβωμεν, that* (it followeth) *we might receive the adoption*; that is, that we by virtue and in consequence of that birth from a woman, and of that obedience to the law performed by our brother, might be in capacity to receive the quality or state of sons to God.

It was likewise seemly that the Devil, who by the weakness of a woman had seduced man from his duty to God, had overthrown, triumphed over, and captivated God's creature, in just amends, for the reparation of God's honour, and our consolation, should by the strength and faithful constancy of one, proceeding from a woman, be himself defeated and debased; according to the mystical intent of that most ancient prophecy, or promise, *The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head*; of the woman, the man is not mentioned; for,

^{Isa. vii. 14.} 2. Our Lord was born of a virgin: so it was ^{most} cently presignified and predicted; *a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son; a virgin; Almah, ἀνόκρυψος*, (so Aquila, with respect to the derivation of the word, did render it,) that is, *a recluse*; one who perhaps had seldom seen, who *never had known a man*.

^{Jer. xxxi. 22.} This, it seemeth, was that *new thing* (that most strange and admirable thing) which God in the prophet Jeremiah did foreshew, that he *would create in the earth*, and which should then happen, when he would restore Zion, and establish a new covenant with his people; namely, a *woman shall compass a man*; a woman in a manner extraordinary, without

the concourse of a male, should conceive, and enclose in her womb a man ; that very man who should accomplish the great matters there predicted and promised. So it was, and so upon divers accounts it was requisite that it should be.

For how otherwise apparently, to the sense and satisfaction of all men, could he be that which (according to ancient prophecies and common expectation, as also according to the exigency of things, and the tenor of divine purposes) he ought to be, both the Son of God and the Son of Man, otherwise than by coming of a virgin ? He must be born of a woman, that he might truly be the son of man ; he must be born of a virgin, that he might be clearly the Son of God ; how otherwise could there be an effectual conviction of his divine original ?

It was also decent and expedient, that the tabernacle in which God should reside and dwell, should be proper and enclosed ; that the temple of the divinity should be holy and separate ; that the soil, whence holiness itself would sprout forth, should be clear and pure from all sordid mixtures ; that none should presume to touch the border of that holy * mountain, where God so specially would manifest himself ; that the lust of man should not approach that place, whence the glory of God would so illustriously shine forth.

It was also most convenient for exciting due attention and regard, for begetting faith, for procuring reverence and admiration in men, that our Redeemer should enter on the world in a manner so peculiar and miraculous : for who that heareth of such an event, can forbear to mind it, and ponder on it ? who can doubt him to be the Son of God, whom by

SERM. sufficient and certain attestation he learneth to have
XXIV. been conceived without any concurrence of man? who will not readily defer high veneration to him, who appeareth in a manner so glorious and supernatural?

3. Moreover, our Saviour was born of Mary; of that singular person determined and described in the Gospels; of her that was espoused to and did live with Joseph; with Joseph the carpenter; who was born in the town of Bethlehem, who lived in the city of Nazareth in Galilee; who both according to natural and legal extraction was descended in a direct lineage from king David, being, as St. Luke saith, ^{*EE εἰναι τοις πατρὶς Δαυΐδι.*} *the house and family of David,* and who by consequence did lineally come from Abraham. She herself was also of the same stock and family; as may be collected from circumstances intimated in the story, and certainly may be deduced from the prophecies concerning our Saviour's stock, with the assertions implying their accomplishment.

Of *Mary* therefore, by blood and progeny a princess, extracted from the most illustrious stem on earth; not only famous among men, but (which is infinitely more) especially dear to God; who yet in external condition was very mean and poor, living obscurely in habitation with an artisan, of a painful and not gainful trade.

As for her personal qualifications, they were excellently worthy; for in disposition of mind she was very religious and devout toward God; in the temper of her spirit, very sweet and calm, very modest, meek, and humble; such the passages occurring in the Gospels concerning her do shew her to have been; such particularly that most excellent hymn ejacu-

lated by her (wherein we may discover a spirit vanished with the most sprightly devotion imaginable ; a devotion full of ardent love, of humble thankfulness, of hearty joy, tempered with most submissive reverence) demonstrateth her to have been.

Of a mother so related, and so qualified, our Saviour was born ; both which points were requisite.

She was so related, for the declaration of God's truth, fidelity, and constancy, in accomplishing those ancient predictions and promises made to the Fathers ; to Abraham, that *in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed* ; to David, that *of the fruit of his loins God would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne* ; concerning whom, as by many passages in the gospel it appeareth, God's people had a general expectation and persuasion, that he should be the *Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch growing out of his roots* ; *in whom the horn of David should bud* ; who should raise the *tabernacle of David that was fallen, and rule over the kingdom of Jacob for ever* : and that our Lord should be born at Bethlehem, that he should be called a Nazarene, were circumstances touched in the Prophets, for the verification whereof it was needful that the mother of our Lord should be thus related.

She was also to be so duly qualified, as to her state and mind ; being homely in state of life, and holy in disposition of mind ; to signify, that God did not so much regard the outward pomps and appearances of this vain world, as the inward frame and temper of spirit.

It is indeed no small disparagement to those empty glories, which men are wont so hugely to admire, and it may be a strong inducement to a

SERM.
XXIV.Gen. xxvi.
4 xiii. 3.

xxii. 18.

Gal. iii. 8.

Acts iii. 25.
ii. 15.Isa. xi. 1.
10.Rom. i. 3.
xv. 2.

Ps. cxxxii.

Rev. v. 5.

xxii. 16.

Amos ix.

Acts xv. 16.

Luke i. 32.

Jer. xxxiii.

15. xxiii. 5.

Matt. ii. 5.
15, 21, 23.

SERM. moderate esteem of them, if we consider it, that
 XXIV. God did not choose for the mother of his Son, and

Saviour of mankind, a visibly great princess, or any
 to appearance honourable, splendid, or wealthy per-
 sonage; but her that was espoused to a mechanic
 artificer, her that was only rich in grace, and decked

1 Pet. iii. 4. with interior endowments; *adorned* (after the garb
 which St. Peter recommendeth to women) *with the
 hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible pu-
 rity of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight
 of God is of great price.* This is the reflection
 which she herself did make upon the matter; for

Luke i. 51. *this her soul did magnify God, because he had re-
 garded the low estate of his handmaiden;—he had
 shewed strength with his arm, he had scattered the
 proud in the imagination of their hearts; he had
 put down the mighty from their seat, and had ex-
 alted the humble and meek; he had filled the hun-
 gry with good things, and the rich he had sent
 empty away.* This sheweth the extreme folly of
 contemning the poor, to whom commonly God ex-
 presseth so special regard, who are capable of so
 high favours, who have so glorious consorts of their
 state.

Such a person did the Son of God choose to bear
 himself, to bear duty unto, to confer that special
 favour and eminent honour upon; an honour, among
 all exterior honours the highest that ever was vouch-
 safed to any of human kind, or indeed to any mere
 creature.

I say of exterior honours; for spiritual advantages
 our Lord himself doth teach us in our esteem to pre-
 fer above this great privilege; they being *toto ge-
 nere*, superior, and placing us in a nobler relation

to him than this; *Whosoever, saith he, shall do the will of my Father that is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother;* the same in a more excellent manner and sublime degree is allied,^{50.} is endeared to me, than he can be upon the score of any carnal kindred: the conformity to him in our mind and affections doth render us nearer to him than any cognation of blood; the having him formed in our hearts is more considerable, than the bearing of him in the womb.

Indeed, the mother of our Lord herself, although as such she was κεχαριτωμένη, especially favoured Luke i. 28,
and graced, and blessed among women; although 48, 49.
upon that account all nations must esteem and call her blessed; although worthily she did in that respect acknowledge, that God had done μεγαλεῖα, magnificent and mighty things for her; yet really, in just esteem, to have Christ born in her soul, to have participated of his divine grace and presence in her heart, the Holy Ghost's having produced a spiritual birth of holy dispositions in her, was a nobler honour and a truer happiness than that; neither οὐδὲ πεπο-
φρόνησε τὸν would it, as St. Chrysostom saith, have been any-
wise profitable to her, if she had not been virtuous, τὸν διανοει-
to bear Christ in her womb, or to bring forth that ἀνθρώπου
admirable birth; this our Saviour plainly declared, δε, ἀπείρι-
whenas a good woman, transported by the ravishing Chrys. in
excellency of his discourse, did cry out, * **Blessed is**
the womb that bare thee, he thence took occasion Matt. xii.
to say, **Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.** 50.
* Luke xi. 27.

We might also here further observe, that our Saviour upon other good accounts willingly did choose so mean a parentage; namely,

SERM. That he thence might have readier opportunity
XXIV. to undergo and taste the greatest inconveniences
 and hardships incident to our nature, thereby more
 fully meriting and suffering for us.

That he might have occasion to exemplify the most difficult virtues and duties, (humility, meekness, patience, contentedness,) shewing us how we should virtuously comport with the lowest state; how we should cheerfully sustain wants, labours, pains, and disgraces; how we should contentedly be destitute of all the glories, riches, and pleasures of this world.

That also the divine power and glory might appear more conspicuously through his worldly state of impotency and baseness.

That he might insinuate the nature of his kingdom not to consist in secular pomp and puissance, but in spiritual power over the hearts of men.

That he might discover wherein our happiness doth consist; how little any thing, which is high in vulgar esteem of men, is an ingredient thereof: and what is the true grandeur of a man; not his outward garb and retinue, but his inward virtue and goodness.

Finally, this relation of the blessed Virgin to our Lord, as it should beget a precious esteem and honourable memory of her, (for let that mouth be cursed which will not call her blessed, let the name of him be branded with everlasting reproach of folly, who will not prefer her in dignity before any queen or empress,) so it should not serve to breed in us fond opinions, or to ground superstitious practices in regard to her, as it hath happened to do among

divers sorts of Christians; especially among the adherents to Rome. For,

They (out of a wanton mind, but in effect profanely and sacrilegiously) have attributed to her divers swelling and vain names, divers scandalously unsavoury, some hideously blasphemous, titles and elo-
gies, as alluding to, so intrenching upon, the incom-
municable prerogatives of God Almighty and of our
blessed Saviour; such as *the Queen of Heaven, the*
Health of the World, the Mother of Mercies, the
Spouse of God, Our Lady, (as if, beside our *unus*
Dominus, there were *una Domina* in the church,
forgotten by St. Paul,) with the like.

Eph. iv. 5.
1 Cor. viii.

They ascribe to her the most sublime attributes 6.
of God, together with his most peculiar actions of
providence and protection over us, yea of redemp-
tion itself.

They yield acts of religious veneration (prayer
and praise) to her, and those in a very high manner
and strain; professing not only *to serve her* reli-
giously, (which the holy scripture chargeth us to do
in regard to God and him only,) but *ὑπερδουλεύειν*, to
do more than serve her, or to serve her with ex-
ceeding devotion.

Who commonly do at the end of their works join,
Praise be to God and to the blessed Virgin; as if Laus Deo et
B. Virginis.

All this they do, without any plain reason, any
plausible authority, any ancient example, yea mani-
festly enough against the best reason, the commands
of God, the doctrine and practice of the primitive
church, all which do conspire in appropriating reli-

SERM. gious adoration to God alone; neither the holy
 XXIV. scripture nor the first Fathers excepting the blessed
 Virgin from the general rule, or taking notice of her
 as an object of our worship, but nipping the first
 essays of such a superstition in the Collyridians.

Such groundless and foolish conceits, such dangerous and impious practices, we should carefully beware; the which, as they much derogate from God's honour, and prejudice his service, and thwart his commands, so they indeed do rather greatly discredit, injure, and abuse the blessed Virgin, (making her name accessory to such enormous scandals,) than they do bring any honour, or do any right to her.

And I doubt not, but, *εἰ τις αἰσθησίς*, if she from her seat of bliss doth behold these perverse services, or absurd flatteries of her, she with holy regret and disdain doth distaste, loathe, disdain, and reject them; with a *Non nobis Domine*, Psal. 115. *Not unto us, O Lord*; and with the angel in the Apocalypse, "Ορα μὴ, See thou do it not."

Rev. xix.
10. xxii. 9.
Acts x. 26.
xiv. 14.

Whose greater honour it was, in truth, to be a meek and humble servant, than to be the mother of her Lord and Saviour; it is the chief and truest honour we can do her, to esteem her great modesty and humility, to imitate her piety and grace, after her pattern conscientiously to reverence and obey her Son; unto whom therefore let us with hearty thankfulness render all glory and praise. *Amen.*

Suffered under Pontius Pilate.

S E R M O N XXV.

1 Cor. i. 23.

*But we preach Christ * crucified.*

* Who was
crucified.

THE doctrine of the gospel is called † *the word of the cross*; that is, a report concerning our Lord's crucifixion, together with the declaration of the ends, effects, and uses of it; this being a special and main point therein, whereto all the rest are closely allied, and whereon the whole method of our salvation dependeth; a point, which (as St. Paul in this and in several other places doth acquaint us) of all others did find the hardest entertainment among all sorts of people, to whom it was addressed; few auditors being disposed to swallow it, or able to digest it. The Jews were much offended, that one who suffered by their hands in so vile and wretched a manner should be propounded to them as their *Messias* and *King*; the same who, according to their opinions and hopes, (grounded on their ancient prophecies plausibly interpreted, and on their constant traditions,) was destined to restore them from their afflicted condition, and to rear them into a high state of prosperity. The pagans took it for an extravagantly foolish conceit, that a person of so mean a quality and so miserable a fortune, should be such

Celsus,
Orig. lib. ii.
p. 83, &c.

lib. i. p.
368.

Porphyrius.
Aug. de
Civ. D. x.

28. Lucian.
Jul. apud
Cyrill. vi. p.
194.

Tryphon.
apud Just.
(p. 317.)

SERM. as was told them, *the Son of God, and Lord of all things*, the author of happiness, and the object of highest adoration to all men; very absurd and abominable this proposition did generally seem to the carnal and worldly prejudices of men, who little could understand, and less would consider the sublime design thereof; but to those who (being endued with a meek heart, and enlightened by divine grace) did rightly apprehend and duly weigh it, it did afford great satisfaction and comfort; it had on them a most effectual and beneficial influence; proving indeed unto them *the power of God to salvation*; ^{1 Cor. i. 18.} ^{Rom. i. 16.} as raising in them strong hopes of salvation, and engaging them in a practice conducible thereto. Upon this point therefore our Lord's ambassadors, the holy apostles, in their preaching chiefly did insist, declaring the great ends and excellent fruits of our blessed Saviour's crucifixion; according to that of St. Paul,

^{1 Cor. ii. 2.} *I determine to know nothing among you save Christ, and him crucified.*

It is therefore questionless a most profitable, and ever (especially now, when our Lord's passion is by the church solemnly commemorated) very seasonable subject of our meditation; apt to excite good thoughts, good affections, and good resolutions in us; and as such, I mean now to recommend and apply it; endeavouring to assist your meditation by suggesting some remarkable particulars concerning it; and in my discourse I shall not so much generally consider the death and passion of our Lord, as the particular manner and kind thereof, by crucifixion; the which we may contemplate, as qualified with divers notable adjuncts; namely, 1. As a suffering in appearance criminal. 2. As most bitter

Tryphon the Jew, in Justin Martyr, doth confess, that Christ, according to the prophecies of holy scripture, was to suffer; but it did offend him that he should suf-

and painful. 3. As most ignominious and shameful. SERM.
 4. As agreeable and advantageous to the intents of XXV.
 his passion. 5. As completer of ancient presignifi-fer in this
 cations and predictions. 6. As apt to excite devo-^{kind. Just.} Mart. p.
 tion in us, and to enforce on us the practice of our ^{317.}
 duty.

I. Let us consider it as a suffering in appearance criminal; or a seeming execution of justice upon our Lord, as a malefactor; *He was*, as the prophet Isa. lxxii. 12. foretold, *numbered among the transgressors*; and, God, saith St. Paul, *made him sin for us, who knew no sin*; that is, God ordered him to be dealt with as an exceedingly sinful or criminous person, who in himself was perfectly innocent, and void of the least tendency to any fault: so in effect it was, that he John v. 18. was impeached of the highest crimes, not only as a x. 30. vii. 12. violator of the divine law, in breaking the sabbath, in keeping bad company, and holding an over-free conversation; but as an impostor, deluding and seducing the people; as a blasphemer, assuming to himself the properties and prerogatives of God; as a seditious and rebellious person, *perverting the nation*, Luke xxiii. forbidding the payments of tribute to Cæsar, ^{2.} Matt. xxvii. usurping royal authority, and pretending to be ^{63.} Christ a King; in general, as a κακοποῖος, a malefactor, or one guilty of notable crimes; so his prosecutors (in the Gospel) did affirm; *If, said they John xviii. to Pilate, he were not a malefactor, we should not* ^{30.} *have delivered him up unto thee*: as such he was represented and arraigned; and that, although by a sentence wrested from the judge against his conscience, by the malicious importunity of his accusers, he was condemned, and in pretence suffered as such, is clear, and admitted by all.

SERM. Now whereas any death or passion of our Lord
XXV. (as being in itself infinitely valuable, and most pre-
cious in the sight of God) might have been sufficient
toward the accomplishing the general designs of his
passion, the expiation of our guilt, the appeasement
of God's wrath, the satisfaction of divine justice; it
might be inquired, why God should so expose him,
and why he should choose to suffer under this odious
and ugly character: to satisfy this demand, and that
we may the more admire the wisdom and goodness
of God in this great dispensation, divers reasons may
be assigned, which are intimated in holy scripture,
or bear a conformity to its doctrine, why it was so
ordered. For,

1. As our Saviour freely did undertake a life of
greatest meanness and hardship, so upon the like
accounts he might be pleased to undergo a death, of
all most bitter and uncomfortable: there is nothing
to man's nature (especially to honest and ingenuous
nature, wherein natural modesty is not extinct)
more abominable than such a death: God for good
purposes hath planted in our constitution a lively
sense of disgrace; and of all disgraces that which
proceedeth from an imputation of heinous crimes is
most disgusting and pungent; and being conscious
of our innocence, doth increase the smart; and to
reflect upon ourselves dying under it, or leaving the
world with an indelible stain upon our name and
memory, is yet more grievous; even to languish by
degrees, enduring the torments of a long, however
sharp disease, would, to any ingenuous person, be far
more eligible, than in this manner (of being reputed
and treated as a villain) to find a quick and easy
despatch; some touch of which resentment we may

ceive breaking forth in our Lord, and somewhat SERM.
man's nature discovering itself in that question ; XXV.
ye come out as against a thief, with swords and Luke xxii.
wes ? He did, it seems, as a man, loathe to be pro-^{52.}
nected as a thief; yet he willingly chose it; as he^{55.}
pposely did embrace other the worst of distasteful
ngs belonging to our nature, and incident to that
ly condition, into which he did put himself, (not
being made in the likeness of man, but taking Phil. ii. 7.
form of a servant ;) to endure want, and to fare
rdly; to be slighted, envied, hated, scorned, and
roached through the whole course of his life.
d he died in any other way, he had not been so
nplete a sufferer, nor had tasted the worst of
at men can and do endure; there had been a
nsort in seeming innocent, which had impaired
perfection of his undertaking. Often was he in John v. 18.
nger of death, both from the close machinations,^{viii. 37, 40,}
I from the open violences of those who maligned^{59. vii. 1,}
^{19. 25. x.}
n; but he industriously declined a death so easy,
I so honourable, if I may so speak; it not being
disgraceful to fall by private malice, or by sudden
e, as by the solemn and deliberate proceeding of
sons in public authority and great credit.
This kind of death he did foresee, and plainly
h satisfaction did aim at; he (as we have it
ated in the Gospels) did shew his disciples, that
was incumbent on him (by God's appointment,
I his own choice) ὅτι δεῖ αὐτὸν πολλὰ παθεῖν, that he Matt. xvi.
ght to suffer many things; to be reprobated by^{21.}
chief priests, elders, and scribes; to be vilified^{Luke ix. 22.}
them; to be condemned, and delivered up to the^{Mark ix. 12.}
ntiles, εἰς τὸ ἔμπαιξαι, to be mocked, and scourg-
and crucified; as a most flagitious slave.

SERM. XXV. Thus would our Saviour, in conformity to all the rest of his voluntary afflictions, and for a consummation of them, not only suffer in his body by sore bruises and wounds, in his soul by the bitterest sorrows and agonies ; but in his name also and reputation by the foulest scandals ; undergoing as well all the infamy, as the infirmity which did belong unto us, or could befall us ; thus meaning by all means to express his charity, and exercise his compassion toward us ; thus advancing his merit, and yielding the utmost satisfaction to justice in our behalf. Again,

2. Death passing on him as a malefactor by public judgment, did best suit to the nature of his undertaking, was most congruous to his design in suffering, did most aptly represent what he was doing, and imply the reason of his performance. We all were guilty in a most high degree ; we deserved an exemplary condemnation ; the sharpest pain, together with the greatest shame, was due to us, for our unworthy offending our most great and our most good Lord and Maker ; he did undertake in our stead to bear all this, and fully to satisfy for us ; he therefore underwent the like judgment and punishment, being reputed, being termed, being treated as we should have been, in quality of a notorious malefactor, as we in truth are. What we really had acted in dishonouring and usurping upon God, in disordering and troubling the world, in deceiving and perverting others, (by our negligent mistakes and our presumptuous miscarriages ; by our evil practices and contagious examples,) that was imputed to Isa. liii. 6. him, and avenged on him ; *All we like sheep have gone astray ; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniqui-*

ties of us all; he therefore did not only sustain an SERM. equivalent punishment, but in a sort did bear an XXV. equal blame with us before God and man. Further,

3. Seeing it was determined that our Lord should die for us, and that not in a natural but violent manner, so as perfectly to satisfy God's justice, to vindicate his honour, and to evidence his indignation against our sins; it was most fit that he should perform it in that way, wherein God's right is most nearly concerned, and his providence most discernible; wherein it should be most apparent that God did exact and inflict punishment on him, that he did yield unto it, and submissively undergo it. *All* Deut. i. *judgment*, as Moses said in his charge, *is God's*; ^{2 Chron.} xix. 6. or is administered in his name, by authority derived from him; all magistrates being his officers and instruments, by whom he governeth and ordereth the world, his kingdom; whence that which is done in way of formal judgment by persons in authority, God himself may be supposed in a more special and immediate manner to execute it, as being done by his commission, in his stead, on his behalf; with his peculiar superintendance and guidance: it was therefore in our Saviour a signal act of submission to God's authority and justice, becoming the person which he sustained, of our proxy and redeemer, to undergo such a judgment, and such a punishment; whereby he received a doom, as it were, from God's own mouth, uttered by his ministers; and bare the stroke of justice from God's hand, represented by his instruments; wherefore very seasonably and pertinently did he reply to Pilate, avowing his authority under God in those words, *Thou hadst no power*. ^{Kev' Iren.} John xix. ^{ii.}

SERM. over me, (or against me,) except it were given thee
XXV. from above; implying, it was in regard to that ori-
ginally supreme authority of God his Father, and to
his particular appointment upon that occasion, that
our Saviour did then freely subject himself to those
inferior and subordinate powers, as to the proper
ministers of divine justice; had he suffered in any
other way, by any private malice or passion of men,
God's special providence in that case had been less
visible, and Christ's obedience not so remarkable;
and if he must die by public hands, it must be as
a criminal, under a pretence of guilt and demerit;
there must be a formal process, how full soever of
mockery and outrage; there must be testimonies
produced, however false and groundless; there must
be a sentence pronounced, although most partial and
corrupt; for no man is persecuted by authority
without some colour of desert; otherwise it would
cease to be public authority, and become private
violence; the prosecutor then would put off the face
of a magistrate, and appear as a murderer, or a
thief.

4. In fine, our Saviour perhaps in no other way,
with such advantage, could have displayed all kinds
of virtue and goodness, to the honour of God, and
the furtherance of our benefit, as in this: the judg-
ment-hall, with all the passages leading him thither,
and from thence to execution, attended on by guards
of soldiers, among the crowds and clamours of the
people, were as so many theatres, on which he had
opportune convenience visibly, in the eye of the
world, to act divers parts of sublimest virtue; to
express his insuperable constancy in attesting truth
and maintaining a good conscience, his meekness in

calmly bearing the greatest wrongs, his patience in SERM.
contentedly enduring the saddest adversities ; his XXV.
entire resignation to the will and providence of God ;
his peaceable submission to the law and power of
man ; his admirable charity in pitying, in excusing,
in obliging those, by his good wishes and earnest
prayers for their pardon, who in a manner so inju-
rious, so despiteful, so cruel, did persecute him ; yea
in willingly suffering all this for their salvation : all
these excellent virtues and graces, by the matter
being thus ordered, were in a degree most eminent,
and in a manner very conspicuous, demonstrated to
the praise of God's name, and the advancement of
his truth ; for the settlement of our faith and hope ;
for an instruction and encouragement of good prac-
tice to us. Upon such considerations it might be
expedient, that he should suffer in this kind as a
criminal.

Was crucified.

S E R M O N XXVI.

1 COR. i. 23.

But we preach Christ crucified.

SERM. IT is added in the Creed, under *Pontius Pilate* ;
XXVI. ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου ; in which words the preposition
ἐπὶ may either denote the circumstance of time,
when our Saviour's passion did happen ; in the time
of Pontius Pilate's government, or presidency over
Judæa ; so the word ἐπὶ is very frequently used : or
it may also further imply a respect to that person,
as an instrument of our Saviour's passion ; so that it
might also be rendered, by, or under, Pontius Pilate,
as president and judge : thus is the word sometimes
used, (as for instance, where in the gospel it is said,
ἐὰν ἀκουσθῇ τοῦτο ἐπὶ τοῦ ἥγεμόνος, if this be heard by the
governor, or, if it come to the governor's ear, as it
is rendered in our translation.) Neither of these
senses were, I suppose, distinctly, but both rather
conjunctly intended here ; in relation to the evangelical history ; the which (as to the main obvious
passages) we are here supposed to know, and do
profess to believe ; neither do I think any thing
more of mystery designed here beyond the full and
clear determination of our Saviour's person ; or the
declaration of whom we do believe in by circum-
stances most apt and suitable to that purpose ; the

Matt.
xxviii. 14.

time when, the person under whom, and consequently the place where, and manner how he suffered. However all these circumstances are in themselves considerable, and afford some matter of edification to our faith and practice: let us therefore touch them.

SERM.
XXVI.

1. The *time*, in itself most fit, and most agreeable to divine predictions, doth illustrate the wisdom of God in his providence, doth confirm his veracity, his constancy, and his fidelity: for when the fulness of time was come; when the sceptre of legislation and sovereign authority was just departed from Judah; while the Jewish temple did stand, but was shortly to be destroyed; before the Jews were utterly unsettled and dispersed; when the *seventy hebdomades* (of years) were near expiring, the time when the *Messias should be cut off*; when Judaism Dan. ix. 26. was by numerous accession of proselytes diffused over the world, the sacred writings being translated, and legible everywhere; when the world was in the most general peace and deepest calm, consequently men's attention being then more ready, and their minds more capable of instruction and persuasion concerning divine truths; when the most considerable part of the world was united under one empire, (or under two, that of the Romans, and that of the Parthians,) and thence more fit to be incorporated into a spiritual commonwealth, (to communicate in offices of piety, to impart and receive instruction;) when mankind by learning and policy was generally better civilized than ever, more inquisitive after knowledge, and more receptive of truth; when, in short, all things were duly prepared and suited for the great effects designed by God to proceed from

SERM. our Saviour's passion, and other performances, then
XXVI. did he suffer and do what God had in his wisdom
and goodness predetermined, presignified, and pre-
dicted. I might add, that the time was fit to be
set down, as a character apt to confirm the truth of
the history; for direction to a fair inquiry and trial
concerning it; to exclude all confusion and uncer-
tainty about it.

2. As for the *person* under whom our Lord suf-
fered; if we consider him as a *Roman stranger*, (or
Gentile,) or as a *governor* and *Judge*; or with re-
gard to his personal qualities; or according to his
deportment in this affair; something in all these re-
spects may present itself observable by us.

He was an alien from the commonwealth of Is-
rael; so Jews and Gentiles conspired in violence
and injury against their common Saviour; that so in
type and mystery it might be signified how the sins

Rom. iii. 19. of all men did jointly bring him to his death; *that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world might become guilty before God.* Neither was it

Matt. xx. 19. xxvii. 18. for nothing decreed by God, that the Jews should (as our Saviour foretold) *deliver him up* (*τοῖς ἑβραιοῖς*) to the Gentiles, *to mock, and scourge, and crucify him.*

The Jews out of envy and malice delivered him up, accused and prosecuted him, instigated and importuned against him; the Gentiles, out of ignorance, profaneness, and unjust partiality, condemned and executed him; whereby the ingratitude, iniquity, and impiety of all mankind did in some sort ap-

Rom. v. 6, pear, and was aptly represented; and consequently

8, 10. his immense goodness is demonstrated, who for so

1 Pet. iii. 18. impious, unjust, and flagitious a generation, for so
malicious enemies, for so cruel persecutors of him-

self, did willingly suffer : them, who so combined in SERM. mischief against him, he then designed to conjoin in XXVI. reconciliation to God, and in mutual peace and charity toward one another ; *reconciling both unto God* Eph. ii. 16. *in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity* Col. i. 20. *thereby.*

A stranger also was proper for the management of this affair, as apt to be a more fair and indifferent judge ; doing what was designed and fit to be done in our Saviour's trial for vindication of his personal innocence, and declaration of the iniquity practised against him.

Again, if we consider Pilate as a governor and judge, (for so he was, Cæsar's procurator, and president of Judæa, ἐπίτροπος, and ἵγεμὸν he is called;) we therein may discern the wisdom and special providence of God ; punishing our Saviour for us by his own officer in a course of justice ; the loyal obedience of our Saviour submitting both to God and to man, although in a case of plain outrage and highest injustice against himself ; the heinousness of that wicked proceeding, wherein that sacred power committed by God to men, and the venerable name of justice were so abused ; for if ever, then one might have said with the Preacher, *I saw the place of judgment, that wickedness was there ; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.* Eccl. iii. 16.

As for Pilate's personal qualities ; he is by the historians writing near those times reported to have been a man of a harsh and rough temper ; wilful and haughty in spirit ; violent, rapacious, and cruel in his proceedings ; and was therefore a proper instrument of Providence for execution of such a business ; so holy and gracious in God's purpose, so

SERM. villainous and barbarous according to man's intention.
 XXVI. such a person deserved to bear the guilt of a fact so execrably base ; was worthy to be employed therein, and ready enough to undergo it : it had not in itself been so plausible that such an act should, nor so credible that it could, proceed from any person otherwise of good disposition, or right intention; but for him it was proper, of him it could not be improbable ; who by his former violences (such as upon the complaints of this people did soon after,

^{Joseph. An-} Josephus telleth, remove him from his charge) had tiq. xviii. 5. so incensed the Jews, that he would not stick to gratify them in a matter wherein they so earnestly concerned themselves ; and which in semblance (setting aside considerations of justice and honesty, so little material in such a person's regard) so little touched his own interest ; in yielding up so poor, so as to outward show inconsiderable a person, as

Mark xv. a boon or sacrifice to their importunate rage ; *Pilate, saith St. Mark, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.*

^{15.} ^{To ιανόν πονηραν τῷ σχλαψ.} Such an one he was ; and yet it is observable, that in comparison to the furious Jews, he behaved himself with some moderation and ingenuity : he John xix. 6. was so fair in examination of the case, as, notwithstanding their eager and clamorous prosecution, to discern the right, and to declare our Saviour guiltless : he was so far constant and true to his conscience, as to expostulate with the Jews, and once, John xix. twice, a third time, to challenge them, *Why, what 12. Ιερου.* *evil hath he done ?* As often did he discover his inclination and readiness (yea, his will and intention, his earnest desire—) to free the innocent person :

yet had he not the heart or the honesty throughly to SERM.
resist their importunitieS ; they were more obstinate XXVI.
in their wicked designs, than he resolute in his good Luke xxiii.
purposes : so partly out of fear to offend them, partly 20.
out of favour to oblige them, (those two usual cor- Acts iii. 13.
rupters of right judgment,) he yielded to them, un- Koīnēs
worthily suffering himself to be overborne by their ixōnōs
wicked solicitations, so sacrificing acknowledged in- ixōnōs dēr-
nocence to his own private interest and their im- λόνης.
placable malice. Thus did the heathen judge be-
have himself, serving divine Providence, not only in
the public and formal condemnation of our Saviour
to the punishment due unto us, but in the solemn
and serious absolution of him from all blame deserv-
ed by himself : in show he condemned our Saviour ;
in truth he condemned himself, the corrupt judge ;
and the Jews, the malicious accusers : though he
took away his life, yet he cleared his reputation ;
affording a testimony most valid and convincing of
his innocence ; such as was requisite to convince all
Jewish slanders and aspersions ; and sufficient to
confirm our faith.

3. Furthermore, the name of Pontius Pilate intimateth the *place* of our Saviour's passion; he being well known to have been governor of Judæa, and to have his tribunal of justice at the mother-city thereof, Jerusalem : at Jerusalem, *that bloody city*, Ezek. xxii.
as the prophet calls it, whose character it was to 2. xxiv. 6.
be the *killer of the prophets, and the stoner of* Luke xiii.
them who were sent unto her; out of which it Ps. xlviii. 2.
was (in a sort) *impossible*, that a prophet should lxxxvii. 3.
perish ; yet the place of all the world most favoured, Deut. xli. 5.
and graced by God by special blessings and privi- Neh. ix. 1.
leges; at Jerusalem, his own peculiar seat; *the city of* Ezra vi. 12.

SERM. *God, the city of the great King,* it is styled ; the
 XXVI. which he *out of all the tribes of Israel, out of all*
^{1 Kings xi. 32.} *the people of the earth, had chosen to put his name*
^{Matt. iv. 5. xxvii. 53.} *(to place his especial presence) there ; the holy and*
^{Rev. xx. 9.} *beloved city ;* there at his own doors, as it were,
 &c.

before his own sacred palace, where most especial respect and veneration were due to him, was the King of heaven adjudged and executed ; by procurement of his own servants, peculiarly related to him, the chief priests and elders of his chosen people, persons wholly devoted to his service, and highly dignified by him ; whose office and especial duty it was to maintain truth and encourage righteousness, to procure, by their instruction and practice, honour to God and obedience to his commandments ; which circumstance considered, as it highly advances the goodness of him who willingly suffered there, and by such persons, so it much aggravateth man's ingratitude and iniquity.

I shall now proceed to handle the rest of the particulars which I proposed in the beginning of the last Discourse.

II. We may consider that his suffering was most bitter and painful. We may easily imagine, what acerbity of pain must be endured by our Lord, in his tender limbs being stretched forth, racked, and tentered, and continuing a good time in such a posture ; by the *piercing his hands and his feet,* parts exquisitely sensible, with sharp nails, (so that, as it

^{Psal. cv. 18.} is said of Joseph, *the iron-entered into his soul,) by O. T.* abiding exposed to the injuries of sun scorching, wind beating upon, weather searching his grievous wounds and sores : such a pain it was, and that no stupifying, no transient pain, but a pain very acute,

d withal lingering: for we see that he, and those SERM.
io suffered with him, had both presence of mind XXVI.
d time to discourse; even six long hours did he ^{Mark xv.}
ntinue under such torture, sustaining in each mi-^{25, 34-}
te of them beyond the pangs of an ordinary death.
it as the case was so hard and sad, so the reason
ereof was great, and the fruit answerably excel-
it; our Saviour did embrace such a passion, that
being thus ready to endure the most grievous
arts for us, he might demonstrate the vehemence
his love; that he might signify the heinousness
our sins, which deserved that from such a Person,
heavy punishment should be exacted; that he
ight appear to yield a valuable compensation for
ose everlasting tortures which we should have en-
red; that he might thoroughly exemplify the
rdest duties of obedience and patience. Further,

III. We may consider this sort of punishment, as ^{Quod etiam} homine li-
ost sharp and afflictive, so most vile and shameful; ^{berò quam-}
ing proper to the basest condition of the worst ^{vis nocente} videatur in-
en, and *unworthy*, as Lactantius saith, *of a free-* ^{dignum.} *In, however nocent or guilty.* It was *servile sup-* ^{Lact. iv. (p.} ^{436.)}
icium, a punishment never by the Romans, under
iose law our Lord suffered, legally inflicted upon
emen, but only upon slaves, that is, upon people
arce regarded as men, having in a sort forfeited
lost themselves; and among the Jews likewise,
at execution which most approached thereto, and
part agreed with it, (for they had no so inhuman
nishment appointed by their law,) hanging up the
ad bodies of some who had been executed, was
emed most infamous and execrable; for *cursed*, ^{Deut. xxi.}
id the Law, *is every one that hangeth upon a* ^{23.} ^{Tūro γάρ} ^{Gal. iii. 16.}
ze; cursed, that is, devoted to reproach and male- ^{μόνον της τε}
^{λαυρῆς τὸ}

SERM. diction; *accursed of God*, it is in the Hebrew; that
 XXVI. is, seeming to be deserted by God, or to be exposed
^{Ἄθεος ἀντίστηται τῷ Θεῷ.}
^{γένεται λιανοῦ.}
^{Chrys. tom.}
^{vi. Or. 61.} to affliction by his special order.

Indeed, according to course of things, to be raised
 on high, and for continuance of time to be objected
 to the view of all that pass by, in that calamitous
 posture, doth breed ill suspicion, doth provoke cen-
 sure, doth invite contempt, scorn, and obloquy;
 doth naturally draw forth language of derision, de-
 spite, and detestation, especially from the inconsi-
 derate, rude, and hard-hearted vulgar; which com-
 monly doth think, speak, deal with men according
 to event and appearance, (*—sequitur fortunam sem-*
 Heb. x. 33. *per et odit damnatos,*) whence *θεσπρίζεσθαι*, to be
made a gazing-stock, or object of reproach to the
 multitude, is accounted by the apostle as an aggra-
 vation of the hardships endured by the primitive
 Christians: and thus in the highest degree did it
 happen to our Lord; for we read that the people
 did in that condition mock, jeer, and revile him;
 Luke xxiii. ἐξεμυκτήριζον, ἐνέπταιζον, ἐβλασφήμουν, they drew up their
 35, 36. Matt. xxvii. noses, they shot out their lips, they shaked their
 38. heads at him; they let out their wicked and wanton
 tongues against him; verifying that prediction in
 Psal. xxii. the Psalm, *I am a reproach of men, and despised*
 6, 7. *of the people; all they that see me laugh me to*
scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head,
saying, He trusted in the Lord, that he would de-
liver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted
in him: in this case the same persons who formerly
 had admired his glorious works, who had been ra-
 Matt. ix. 33. vished with his excellent discourses, who had fol-
 xxi. 9. xii. 23. lowed and favoured him so earnestly, who had
 Luke iv. 15. blessed and magnified him, (for *he*, saith St. Luke,

did teach in their synagogues, δοξαζόμενος ἵππο πάντων, SERM. being glorified by all,) even those very men did XXVI. then behold him with pitiless scorn and despite; εἰστίκει ὁ λαὸς θεωρῶν, the people, saith St. Luke, stood ^{Luke xxiii.} gazing upon him, in correspondence to that in the prophet, ^{35.} They look and stare upon me; they looked ^{17.} in a scornful manner, venting contemptuous and spiteful reproaches, as we see reported in the evangelical histories.

Thus did our Saviour endure the cross, despising ^{Heb. xii. 2.} the shame; despising the shame, that is, not simply disregarding or disesteeming it, as no evil, with a Stoical haughtiness, or Cynical immodesty; but not eschewing it, or not valuing it as so great an evil, that for declining it he would neglect the prosecution of his great and glorious designs. There is in man's nature an aversion and abhorrency from disgraceful abuse, no less strong than are the like antipathies to pain; whence cruel mockings and ^{Heb. xi. 36.} scourgings we find coupled together, as ingredients of the sore persecutions sustained by God's faithful martyrs; and generally men will more readily embrace, and more contentedly support the latter than the former; pain not so grievously affecting the lower sense, as being insolently despised doth grate on the fancy and wound the mind; for the wounds ^{Prov. xviii. 8. xii. 18.} of infamy do, as the Wise Man telleth us, go down into the innermost parts of the belly, piercing the very hearts of men, and touching the soul to the quick. We need not therefore doubt, but that our Saviour (as a man, endued with human passions and infirmities) was sensible of this natural evil; and that such indignity did add somewhat of bitterness and loathsomeness to his cup of affliction, espe-

SERM. cially considering that his great charity disposed
 XXVI. him to grieve, observing men to act so very inde-
 cently, so unworthily, and so unjustly toward him ;
 yet in consideration of the glory that would thence
 accrue to God, of the benefit that would redound to
 Heb. xii. 2. us, of *the joy that was set before him*, when he
 Isa. liii. 11. *should see of the travail of his soul, and be satis-
 fied*, he did most willingly undertake and gladly
 Gal. iii. 13. undergo it : *He became*, as the apostle saith, *a
 curse for us*, or was exposed to malediction and re-
 viling ; he endured *the contradiction* (or obloquy)
 Heb. xii. 3. of *sinful men*, he was *despised, rejected, and dis-
 esteemed of men* ; he in the common apprehensions
 Isa. liii. 3, 4. of men did seem deserted by God, according to that
 of the prophet, *We did esteem him stricken, smitten
 of God, and afflicted* ; he did himself in a man-
 ner seem to concur in that opinion, as by that woful
 outcry, *Lama sabacthani?* doth appear ; so did he
 become a curse for us, *that*, as the apostle subjoineth,
*we might be redeemed from the curse of the
 Law*, that is, that we might be saved from that ex-
 emplary punishment due to our transgressions of the
 Law ; with the displeasure of God appearing there-
 in, and the disgrace before men attending it : he
 Phil. ii. 7. chose thus to *make himself of no reputation*, as the
 apostle speaketh, being contented to be dealt with
 as a wretched slave and wicked miscreant, that we
 might be exempted not only from the torment, but
 also from the ignominy we had deserved ; that we,
 together with our life, and safety, and liberty, might
 recover even that honour which we had forfeited.

But lest any one should be tempted not suffi-
 ciently to value these sufferings of our Lord, as
 things not so rare, but that other men have tasted

the like; or should be ready to compare them with SERM.
the sufferings of other virtuous men, as Celsus did
with those of Anaxarchus and Epictetus; I shall
by the bye interpose somewhat observable concerning
them. We may then consider, that not only
the infinite excellency of his person, and the perfect
innocency of his life, did enhance the price of his
sufferings, but some endowments peculiar to him,
and some circumstances, did increase their force:
he was not only, according to the frame and temper
of human nature, sensibly affected with the pain
and shame, and all the rest of evils apparently waiting
on his passion; as God (when he did insert
sense and passion in our nature, ordering objects to
affect them) did intend that we should be, and as
other men in like outward circumstances would have
been, but in many respects beyond that ordinary
rate; no man, we may suppose, could have felt such
grief from them as he did; no man did ever feel
any thing comparable to what he did endure; it
might be truly applied to him, *Behold, and see if*
there be any sorrow like to my sorrow, which is<sup>Lam. i. 22.
Luke xxii.</sup>
done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted
<sup>Πλειστον
των θανάτων.</sup>
me in the day of his fierce anger,<sup>Matt. xxvi.
37, 38.</sup>
as that extraordinary sweating great lumps of blood
may argue; as
<sup>Luke xxii.
44.</sup>
the terms expressing his affliction do intimate; for,
in regard to present evils, *his soul* is said to have been
exceedingly sorrowful unto death; he is said, *ἀδημο-*<sup>John xiii.
21. xii. 27.
Mark xiv.</sup>
νεῦ, to be in great anguish and anxiety; and to be^{33.}
in an agony, or pang; in respect to mischiefs which
he foresaw coming on, he is said, *ταράττεσθαι τῷ κρί-*
πατι, to be disordered, or *disturbed in spirit,* and
ἐκπληξεῖσθαι, to be amazed, or dismayed at them; to
such excessive height of passion did the sense of in-

SERM. cumbent evils and the prospect of impendent disasters, the apprehension of his own case and reflection upon our state, raise him: and no wonder, that such a burden, the weight of all the sins (the numberless heinous sins and abominations) which he did appropriate to himself, that ever have been, or shall be committed by mankind, lying upon his shoulders, he should feel it heavy, he should seem to crouch

Psal. xl. 12. and groan under it; *Innumerable evils*, said he in the mystical Psalm, *have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of my head: therefore my heart faileth me.* God's indignation so dreadfully flaming out against sin might well astonish and terrify him; to stand before the mouth of hell belching out fire and brimstone upon him, to lie down in the hottest furnace of divine vengeance, to undertake with his heart-blood to quench all the wrath of heaven and all the flames of hell, (as he did in regard to those who will not rekindle them to themselves,) might well in the heart of a man beget unconceivable and unexpressible pressures of anguish; when such a Father (so infinitely good and kind to him, and whom he so dearly loved) did hide his face from him, did angrily frown on him, how could he otherwise than be sorely troubled? It is not strange, that so hearty a love, so tender a pity contemplating our sinfulness, and sustaining our wretchedness, should be deeply affected thereby; any one of those persons, who fondly do pretend to, or vainly glory in, a stupid apathy, or in a stubborn contempt of the evils incident to our nature and state, would in such a case have been utterly dejected; the most resolved philo-

sopher would have been dashed into confusion at SERM.
the sight, would have been crushed to despair under XXVI.
the sense of those calamities which assaulted our
Lord. With the greatness of the causes, the good-
ness of his constitution might also conspire to aug-
ment his suffering ; for surely as his complexion was
most pure and delicate, his spirit most vivid and
apprehensive, his affections most pliant and tract-
able ; so accordingly should the impressions upon
him be most sensible ; and consequently the pains
which he felt both in soul and body most sharp and
afflictive. That we in like cases are not alike af-
fected, that we do not tremble at the apprehensions
of God's displeasure, that we are not affrighted with
the sense of our sins, that we do not with sad horror
resent our own danger or our misery, doth arise
from that we have very glimmering and faint con-
ceptions of those things, or that they do not in so
clear and lively a manner strike our mind and fancy ;
(not appearing in their true nature and proper shape,
so heinous and so hideous, as they really in them-
selves and in their consequences are,) or because
that we have but weak persuasions about them ; or
because we do but slightly consider them ; or from
that our hearts are hard and callous, our affections
cold and dull, so that nothing of this nature (nothing
beside gross material affairs) can easily move or
melt them ; or for that we have in us small love to
God, and little regard to our own true welfare ; for
that briefly in respect to spiritual matters we are
neither so wise, so serious, so sober, nor so good and
ingenuous in any reasonable measure, as we ought
to be : but our Saviour in all these respects was
otherwise disposed ; he most evidently discerned the

SERM. XXVI. wrath of God, the grievousness of sin, the wretchedness of man most truly, most fully, most strongly represented to his imagination and spirit; he most firmly believed, yea most certainly knew all that God's law had declared about them; he thoroughly did consider and weigh them; his heart was most soft and sensible; his affections were most quick, and easily excited by their due objects; he was full of dutiful love to God his Father, and most ardently desirous of our good, bearing a more than fraternal good-will toward us; whence it is not marvellous, that as a man, as a transcendently good man, he was so vehemently affected by those occurrences; that his imagination was so troubled, and his affections so mightily stirred by them; so that he thence truly did suffer in a manner and to a degree unconceivable; according to that ejaculation in the Greek Liturgies, Διὰ τῶν ἀγνώστων σου παθημάτων ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, Χριστέ. *By thy unknown sufferings, O Christ, have mercy on us.* But further,

IV. We may consider, that this way of suffering had in it some particular advantages conducing to the accomplishment of our Lord's principal design.

Its being very notorious, and lasting a competent time, were good advantages; for if he had been privately made away, or suddenly despatched, no such great notice would have been taken of it, nor would the matter of fact itself have been so fully proved to the confirmation of our faith, and conviction of infidelity; nor had that his excellent deportment under such bitter affliction, (his most divine patience, meekness, and charity,) so illustriously shone forth: wherefore (to prevent all exceptions, and excuses of unbelief, and for other collateral good purposes) di-

vine Providence did so manage the business, that as SERM.
the course of his life, so also the manner of his death XXVI.
should be most conspicuous and remarkable; *These* ^{Acts xxvi.}
_{26.} *things*, as St. Paul told king Agrippa, *were not*
done in a corner; and, *I*, said our Lord himself, ^{John xviii.}
spake freely to the world, and in secret have I^{20.}
done nothing; so were the proceedings of his life,
not close or clancular, but frank and open; not pre-
sently hushed up, but carried on leisurely in the face
of the world; that men might have the advantage
to observe and examine them. And as he lived,
so he died most publicly and visibly, the world being
witness of his death, and so prepared to believe his
resurrection, and thence ready to embrace his doc-
trine; according to what he did himself foretell, *I* ^{John xii.32.}
being lifted up from the earth shall draw all men
unto me; he drew all men by so remarkable a death
to take notice of it, he drew some from the won-
drous consequences of it to believe on him: and,
As, saith he again, *Moses did exalt the serpent in* ^{John xiii.}
the wilderness, so must the Son of man be exalted:^{14.}
the elevation of that mysterious serpent upon a pole
did render it visible, and attracted the eyes of people
toward it; whereby God's power invisibly accompa-
nying that sacramental performance, they were
cured of those mortiferous stings which they had
received; so our Lord being mounted on the cross,
allured the eyes of men to behold, and their hearts
to close with him; whereby the heavenly virtue of
God's Spirit cooperating, they become saved from
those destructive sins, which by the Devil's serpen-
tine instigations they had incurred.

Another advantage of this kind of suffering was,
that by it the nature of that kingdom, which he in-

SERM. tended to erect, was evidently signified ; that it was
XXVI. not such as the carnal people did expect, an external, earthly, temporal kingdom, consisting in domination over the bodies and estates of men, dignified by outward wealth and splendour, managed by worldly power and policy, promoted by force and terror of arms, affording to men the advantages of outward safety, peace, and prosperity ; but a kingdom purely spiritual, heavenly, eternal ; consisting in the government of men's hearts and spirits ; adorned with endowments of piety and virtue, administered by the grace and guidance of God's holy Spirit, maintained and propagated by meek instruction, by virtuous example, by hearty devotion and humble patience ; rewarding its loyal subjects with spiritual joys and consolations here, with endless rest and bliss hereafter ; no other kingdom could he be presumed to design, who submitted to this dolorous and disgraceful way of suffering ; no other exploits could he pretend to achieve by expiring on a cross, no other way could he govern who gave himself up to be managed by the will of his enemies ; no other benefits would that forlorn case allow him to dispense ; so that well

Rom. xiv. might he then assert, *My kingdom is not of this world*, when he was going in this signal manner to demonstrate that great truth. It was a touchstone to prove men's disposition, and to discriminate the ingenuous, well-disposed, humble, and sober persons, who would entertain our Lord's heavenly doctrine with acceptance, notwithstanding these disadvantages, *not being offended in him*, from those perverse, vain, proud, profane people, who being scandalized at his adversity would reject him.

John xviii. 36. Another advantage was this, that by it God's spe-

al providence was discovered, and his glory illus- SERM.
rated in the propagation of the gospel; for how
ould it be, that a person of so low parentage, of ^{Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61.}
mean garb, of so poor condition, who underwent
woful and despicable a kind of death, falling
nder the pride and spite of his adversaries, should
easily gain so general an opinon in the world,
among the best, the wisest, the greatest persons,)
f being *the Lord of life and glory*: how, I say,
ould it be, that such a miracle should be effected
ithout God's aid and special concurrence? that
Ierod, who from a long reign in a flourishing state,
ith prosperous success in his undertakings, got the
ame of Great; or that Vespasian; who triumphantly
id ascend the imperial throne, should either of them
y a few admirers of worldly vanity, seriously or
flattery, be deemed the Messias, is not so very
trange: but that one who so miserably was tram-
led on, and treated as a wretched caitif, should instant-
ly conquer innumerable hearts, and from such
depth of extreme adversity should attain the sub-
mest pitch of glory; that *the stone which the build-* ^{Psal. cxviii.}
ers with so much scorn did refuse, should become ^{22, 23.}
the head stone of the corner, this (with good assur-
nce we may say) *is the Lord's doing, and it is*
marvellous in our eyes. It may well be so, and
hereby *the excellency* of divine power and wisdom ^{2 Cor. iv. 7.}
as much glorified; by so impotent, so implausible
nd improbable means, accomplishing so great ef-
ects; subduing the world to his obedience, not by
he active valour of an illustrious hero, but through
he patient submission of a poor, abused, and op-
pressed person; restoring mankind to life by the
eath of a crucified Saviour.

SERM. Again, this kind of suffering to the devout fathers
XXVI. did seem many ways significant, or full of instructive
and admonitive emblems; being a rich and large
field for a devout fancy to range with affectionate
meditation.

Extendit in passione manus suas, &c. Lact. iv. p. 437. His posture on the cross might represent unto us that large and comprehensive charity which he bare in his heart toward us, stretching forth his arms of kindness, pity, and mercy, with them, as it were, to embrace the world, receiving all mankind under the wings of his gracious protection.

Isa. lxv. 2. It might exhibit him as earnestly wooing and entreating us to return unto God, accepting the reconciliation which he then was purchasing, and did then offer to us; *I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people*, said God of old, doing it then mediately and figurately by his prophets, but he did so now immediately and properly by himself; the cross being as a pulpit, from which our Lord *God blessed for ever* did himself in person earnestly preach the overtures of grace, did exhort to repentance, did tender the remission of sin, with action most pathetical and affecting.

Levit. ix. 22. 2 Chron. iv. 1. Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 82. Quod unquam sacra- ficium sa- cratius fuit, quam quod verus l'on- tifex altari crucis per immola- nem sue carnis im- posuit? Leo M. Ep. 83. His ascent to the cross might set forth his discharging that high office of universal High Priest for all ages and all people; the cross being an altar, whereon he did offer up his own flesh, and pour forth his blood, as a pure and perfect sacrifice, propitiating God and expiating the sins of mankind.

His elevation thither may suggest to our thoughts that submission to God's will, suffering for truth and righteousness, the exercises of humility and patience, are conjoined with exaltation, do qualify for, and in effect procure true preferment; so that the lower we

stoop in humility, the higher we shall rise in favour SERM.
with God, the nearer we shall approach to heaven, XXVI.
the surer we shall be of God's blessing, according to
that aphorism of our Lord, *Whosoever humbleth* Luke xviii.
himself shall be exalted. The cross was a throne ^{4.} Matt. xxiii.
whereon humility and patience did sit in high state ^{12.}
^{1 Pet. v. 5.} and glorious majesty, advanced above all worldly ^{James iv.}
^{10.} pride and insolence; it was a great step, a sure as-
cent unto the celestial throne of dignity superlative;
for because our Lord *was obedient unto death, even* Phil. ii. 8,
the death of the cross, therefore did God far exalt^{9.}
him above all dignity and power in heaven and
earth, as St. Paul doth teach us.

O the fallacy of human sense! O the vanity of carnal judgment! nothing ever was more auspicious or more happy than this event, which had so dismal an aspect, and provoked so contemptuous scorn in some, so grievous pity in others: the Devil thought he had done bravely, when he had by his suggestions brought the Son of God into this case; the world supposed itself highly prosperous in its attempts against him; but O how blind and foolish is malice, which then doth most hurt itself, when it triumpheth in the mischief which it doeth to others! How impotent is wickedness, which is never more thoroughly ruined than by its own greatest success! for by thus striving to debase our Lord, they most highly did advance him; by thus crossing our salvation, they most effectually did promote it.

Further, looking up to the cross may admonish us how our salvation is acquired, and whence it doth proceed; not by casting our eyes downward, not from any thing that lieth upon earth; but *our help cometh from above,* our salvation is attained by look-

SERM. ing upwards ; we must lift up our eyes to behold
XXVI. our Saviour procuring it, we must raise up our hearts
 to derive it from him.

Our Lord's crucifixion may also intimate to us, how our flesh must be dealt with, and to what usage we must submit it; for we must not only imitate our Saviour in his holy life, but in some manner should resemble him in his ghastly death; being, as St. Paul

Συμπαθεῖσιν τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ.
 speaketh, *conformable to his death, and planted together with him in the likeness of it; mortifying our earthly members, crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts; having our old man crucified together with Christ, that the body of sin may be destroyed.* His death may fitly shadow our death to sin, his grievous pain the bitterness of our repentance, wherein our souls should be pierced with sharp compunction, as his sacred flesh was torn with nails; his shame that confusion of mind, which regard to our offences should produce within us.

Passio ipsa per se acerba et amara specimen nobis futurorum tormentorum dabat, quam in hoc seculo morantibus virtus ipsa proponit—
Lact. lib. iv. Reflecting on him we may also discern our state here; wherein, if we will be truly and thoroughly virtuous, we must be exposed to envy and hatred, to censure and obloquy, to contempt and scorn, to affliction and hardship; every good man must hang on some cross; *εἰς τοῦτο κείμεθα,* * *We are, saith St. Paul, appointed to this;* it is our lot and portion assigned to us by divine immutable decree; being
 * *1 Thess. iii. 3.* † *predestinated to a conformity with this image of God's Son:* We must, as he did, by many tribula-
 29. *tions enter into the kingdom of God: All that will live godlily in Christ Jesus shall certainly suffer persecution,* one way or other partaking of his cross.

Divers such analogies and resemblances devout meditation might extract from this matter, suggest-

ing practical truths, and exciting good affections in SERM.
us. XXVI.

V. We may (for the confirmation of our faith, and begetting in us a due adoration of the divine wisdom and providence) observe the correspondency of this our Saviour's manner of suffering to the ancient prophecies foretelling, and the typical representations foreshewing it.

That most famous, clear, and complete prophecy concerning the passion, doth express him suffering as a malefactor, (*he was reckoned among the transgressors,*) suffering in a manner very painful, (*he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities,*) suffering in a most ignominious way,) he was despised, and rejected of men, as a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief,) which circumstances could scarce so punctually agree to any other kind of suffering, or punishment then used, as to this.

In the 22d Psalm, the royal prophet describeth an afflicted and forlorn condition, such as by no passages in the story concerning him doth in the full extent, and according to the literal signification of his words, appear suitable to his person, which therefore is more properly to be accommodated unto the Messias, whom he did represent; and in that description, among other passages agreeing to our Lord, these words do occur; *Thou hast brought me into the dust of death; for dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet;* which words how patly and lively do they set out our Saviour's being nailed to the cross, and treated in that cruel and in that shameful way by his malicious adversaries!

Psal. xxii. 15, 16.

SERM. In the prophet Zechariah, God speaking in his own name, *They* (namely some of the Jews, being sensible of what they had acted, and penitently affected for it, they) *shall look upon me, whom they have pierced*; which words need no violence to wring from them the right meaning, no comment to explain them, in accommodation to that matter, to which the Evangelists do apply them, and to which they are so literally congruous.

The same was also fitly prefigured by apposite types. Isaac, the immediate *heir of the promise*, in whom the faithful seed was called and conveyed down, and so a most apt type of our Saviour, being devoted and offered up to God, did himself bear the wood by which he was to be offered: so did our Saviour, the promised seed, in *whom all nations should be blessed*, himself bear the cross by which he was to suffer, and to be offered up a sacrifice to God.

Those who were dangerously bitten by fiery serpents, were, by looking upon a brasen serpent set upon a pole, preserved in life, which (according to most authentic exposition) did represent the salvation which should proceed from our beholding and believing on him lifted up upon the cross to us, who had been mortally struck and stung by that old serpent's poisonous insinuations.

The paschal lamb was a most congruous emblem of *Christ our passover*, (that most innocent and meek, most unblemished and spotless Lamb, slain for the sins of the world.) It was to be killed by the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel, its blood was to be dashed on the side-posts and cross-beams of every door; its body was not to be eaten

raw, nor sodden with water, but roasted whole, and SERM.
dressed upon a spit ; nor were any of its bones to be XXVI.
broken : which circumstances, with so exact caution Exod. xii.
and care prescribed, how they justly suit and fitly 5, 6, 9, 46.
adumbrate this manner of our Saviour's passion, I
need not otherwise than by the bare mention of
them declare ; every one easily being able to com-
pare and adapt them.

VI. Lastly, the consideration of our Lord's thus suffering is applicable to our practice ; being most apt to instruct and affect us ; admonishing us of our duty, and exciting us to a conscientiable performance thereof : no contemplation indeed is more fruitful, or more efficacious toward the sanctification of our hearts and lives, than this of the cross ; for what good affection may not the meditation on it kindle ? what virtue may it not breed and cherish in us ?

1. How can it otherwise than inflame our heart with love toward our Lord, to think what acerbity of pain, what indignity of shame he did willingly undertake, and gladly endure for us ? No imagination can devise a greater expression of charity and friendship ; and if love naturally is productive of love, if friendship meriteth a correspondence in kindness, what effect should the consideration of such ineffable love, of so incomparable friendship, have upon us ?

2. How can a reflection on this case otherwise than work hearty gratitude in us ? Suppose any person for our sake (that he might rescue us from the greatest mischiefs, and purchase for us the highest benefits) willingly should deprive himself of all his estate, his honour, his ease and pleasure, should expose himself to extremest hazards, should endure

John xv. 13.
Eph. v. 2,
25.
Gal. ii. 20.
Rev. i. 5.
Eph. iii. 19.

SERM. the sorest pains and most disgraceful ignominies,
XXVI. should prostitute his life, and lose it in the most hideous manner: should we not then be monstrously ingrateful, if we did not most deeply resent such kindness; if upon all occasions we did not express our thankfulness for it; if we did not ever readily yield all the acknowledgment and all the requital we were able? The case in regard to our Lord is the same in kind, but in degree, whatever we can suppose, doth infinitely fall below the performances for us of him who stooped from the top of heaven, who laid aside the felicity and majesty of God, for the sorrows and infamies of the cross, that he might redeem us from the torments of hell, and procure to us the joys of heaven; so that our obligation to gratitude is unexpressibly great, and we are extremely unworthy, if the effects in our heart and life be not answerable.

^{Rom. viii. 32.} 3. What surer ground of faith in God, or stronger encouragement of hope can there be, than is hence afforded to us? for *if God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for our sake* to the suffering of these bitter pains and contumelies; how can we in any case distrust his bounty, or despair of his mercy? *How*, as St. Paul argueth, *shall he not also with him freely give us all things?* What higher favour could God express, what lower condescension could he shew; how more plainly or surely could he testify his willingness and his delight to do us good, than by ordering the Son of his love to undergo these most grievous things for us? How consequently could there be laid a stronger foundation of our hope and entire confidence in God?

4. What greater engagement (in general) can there

be to obedience, than to consider how readily and SERM.
cheerfully our Lord did submit to the will of God, XXVI.
in bearing the most heavy yoke that could be im-
posed on him, in drinking the most bitter cup that
could be tempered for him : how that he *did humble himself, being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross?* how dearly he did purchase
his property in us, and dominion over us ?

What detestation of our sins must the serious
consideration of this event produce in us ! of our
sins, that brought such tortures and such reproaches
on our blessed Redeemer. Judas the wretch who
betrayed him, the Jewish priests who did accuse
and prosecute him, the wicked rout which abused
and insulted over him, those cruel hands that
smote him, those pitiless hearts that scorned him,
those poisonous tongues that mocked and reviled
him, all those, who anywise were instruments or
abettors of his affliction, how do we loathe them !
how do we detest and curse their memories ! But
how much greater reason have we to abominate our
sins, which were the principal causes of all that
woeful tragedy ! *He was delivered for our offences;* ^{Rom. iv. 25.}
^{2 Cor. v. 21.} they were indeed the traitors, which by the hands
of Judas delivered him up ; *He that knew no sin
was made sin for us ;* that is, was accused, was
condemned, was executed as a sinner for us : it was
therefore we who by our sins did impeach him ; the
spiteful priests were but our advocates ; we by them
did adjudge and sentence him, Pilate (against his
will and conscience) was but our spokesman ; we by
them did inflict that horrid punishment on him, the
Roman executioners were but our agents therein :
He became a curse for us ; that is, all the mockery, ^{Gal. iii. 13.}

SERM. derision, and contumely he endured did proceed
 XXVI. from us; the silly people were but properties, acting
 our parts; our sins were they that cried out *Cruci-
 fice, (Crucify him, crucify him,) with clamours*
 more loud and more effectual than did all the Jew-
 ish rabble; it was they which by the borrowed
 throats of that base people did so outrageously per-
 Isa. liii. 5. *suecte him; He was wounded for our transgres-
 sions, and bruised for our iniquities;* it was they
 which by the hands of the fierce soldiers and of the
 rude populace, as by senseless engines, did buffet
 and scourge him; they by the nails and thorns did
 pierce his flesh and rend his sacred body: upon
 them therefore it is most just and fit that we should
 turn our hatred, that we should discharge our indig-
 nation.

5. And what in reason can be more powerful to
 the breeding in us remorse and penitent sorrow,
 than reflection upon such horrible effects proceeding
 from our sins? how can we but earnestly grieve,
 when we consider ourselves by them to have been the
 betrayers, the slanderers, the murderers of a person
 so innocent and lovely, of one so great and glorious,
 of God's dear Son, and the Lord of all things, of
 our own best friend, and most kind Saviour!

(Matt.
 xxvii. 45,
 51.
 Luke xxiii.
 44.)

6. If ingenuity will not operate so far, and hereby
 melt us into contrition, yet surely this consideration
 must needs produce some fear within us; for can
 we at least otherwise than tremble to think upon
 the heinous guilt of our sins, upon the fierceness of
 God's wrath against them, upon the severity of di-
 vine judgment for them, all so manifestly discovered,
 all so lively set forth in this dismal spectacle? If
 the view of an ordinary execution is apt to beget in

us some terror, some dread of the law, some reverence toward authority, what awful impressions should this singular example of divine justice work upon us! How greatly we should be moved thereby, we may learn from the deportment of the most inanimate creatures; the whole world did seem affected thereat with horror; the frame of things was disturbed, all nature did feel a kind of compassion and compunction for it; the sun (as out of aversion or shame) did hide his face, leaving the earth covered for three hours with mournful blackness; the bowels of the earth did yearn and quake; the rocks were rent; the vail of the temple was torn quite through; graves did open, and the bodies did wake; and can we (who are most concerned) be more stupid than the earth, more obdurate than rocks, more drowsy than buried carcasses, the most insensible and immoveable things in nature?

7. How also can it but hugely deter us from wilful commission of sin, to consider that by it we do, as the apostle teacheth, *recrucify the Son of God,* ἀνατίναξεν. Heb. vi. 6. and again expose him to open shame; bringing upon the stage, and acting over all that direful tragedy; renewing (as to our guilt) all that pain and that disgrace to him; that we thereby, as he telleth us, do *trample upon the Son of God, and prize the blood* Heb. x. 29. *of the covenant* (that most sacred and precious blood, so freely shed for the demonstration of God's mercy, and the ratification of his gracious intentions toward us) *as a common thing*, of no special worth or consideration with us; despising all his so kind and painful endeavours for our salvation; defeating his most gracious purposes and earnest desires for our welfare; rendering all his so bitter and loathsome

SERM. sufferings, in regard to us, altogether vain and fruitless, yea indeed hurtful and pernicious; for if the cross do not save us from our sins, it will sorely aggravate their guilt, and augment their punishment, bringing a severer condemnation and a sadder ruin on us.

8. It may also yield great consolation and joy to us, to contemplate our Lord upon the cross, expressing his immense goodness and charity toward us; transacting our redemption; expiating our sins, and sustaining our miseries; combating and defeating all the adversaries of our salvation.

Is it not comfortable and pleasant to behold him there standing erect, not only as a resolute sufferer, Col. ii. 15. but as a glorious conqueror; where *having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a solemn show, triumphing over them?* No conqueror loftily seated in his triumphal chariot did ever yield a spectacle so gallant or magnificent; no tree was ever adorned with trophies so pompous or precious. To the external view and carnal sense of men, our Lord was then exposed to scorn and shame; but to spiritual and true discerning, all his and our enemies did there hang up, as objects of contempt, quite over-

Matt. xii. thrown and undone: there the Devil, ὁ *ἰσχυρός*, that ^{29.} Lake xi. 23. *strong* and sturdy *one*, did hang, bound and fettered, Heb. ii. 14. disarmed and spoiled, utterly baffled and confounded. ^{1 Cor. xv.}

^{54.} There death itself hung gasping, with its sting plucked out, and all its terrors quelled; his death having prevented ours, and purchased immortality for us. There the world, with its vain pomps, its counterfeit beauties, its fondly admired excellencies, its bewitching pleasures, did hang up, all disparaged and defaced, as it appeared to St. Paul; *God forbid,* ^{2 Tim. i. 10.}

said he, *that I should glory, save in the cross of SERM. Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* There our sins, those sins which, as St. Peter saith, our Saviour did carry up unto the gibbet, did hang, as marks of his victorious prowess, as objects of our horror and hatred, as malefactors by him condemned in the flesh. There that manifold enmity (enmity between God and man, between one man and another, between man and his own self, or conscience) did hang, abolished in his flesh, and slain upon the cross; by the blood whereof he made peace, and reconciled all things in heaven and earth. The blood of the cross was the cement, joining the parts of the world. There, together with all our enemies, did hang all those causes of woe and misery to us, those yokes of bondage, those instruments of vexation, those hard laws, which did so much burden and encumber men, did set them at such distance and variance, did so far subject them to guilt and condemnation; all that bond of ordinances, inducing our obligation to so grievous forfeitures and penalties, was nailed to the cross, being cancelled and expunged by our Saviour's performances there.

9. This consideration is a strong inducement to the practice of charity toward our neighbour: for can we forbear to love those, toward whom our Lord bore such tender affection, for whom he did sustain so woful tortures and indignities? Shall we not in obedience to his most urgent commands, in conformity to his most notable example, in grateful return to him for his benefits, who thus did suffer for us, discharge this most sweet and easy duty toward his beloved friends? Shall we not comport with an infirmity, or bear a petty neglect, or forgive

SER M. a small injury to our brother, whenas our Lord did
XXVI. bear a cross for us, and from us, obtaining pardon

for our numberless most heinous affronts and of-
 fenses against God? It is St. Paul's reasoning; *We*

^{3.} *that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak—for even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.* Can we hear our Lord say,

^{John xv.} *This is my command, That ye love one another, as I have loved you;* and, *Hereby shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one an-*

^{Eph. v. 2.} *other:* can we hear St. Paul exhorting, *Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour:* can we consider St John's

^{1 John iv.} *arguing, Beloved, if God so loved us, then ought we also to love one another: Hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: wherefore we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren?* can, I say, we consider such discourses, without being disposed to comply with them

^{1 Pet. iv. 1.} for the sake of our crucified Saviour; all whose life and death were nothing else but one continual recommendation and enforcement of this duty?

10. Furthermore, What can be more operative than this consideration toward breeding a disregard of this world, with all its deceitful vanities and mischievous delights; toward reconciling our minds to the worst condition it can bring us into; toward supporting our hearts under the heaviest pressures of affliction it can lay upon us? How can we refuse, in submission to God's pleasure, to bear contentedly a slight grievance, when he, as he gladly did, bore a cross, infinitely more grievous to carnal will and

sense than any that can befall us ? Can we expect, SERM.
can we affect, can we desire great prosperity, when-
as the Son of God, our Lord and Master, did only
taste such adversity ? Who can admire those splen-
did trifles which our Lord did never regard in his
life, which at his death did only serve to mock
and abuse him ? Who can relish those sordid plea-
sures, of which he living did not vouchsafe to taste,
and the contraries whereof he dying chose to feel
in all extremity ? Who will dare to vilify, to dis-
dain, to reject a state of sorrow or disgrace, which
he by a voluntary susception of it hath so dignified
and graced ; by which we resemble and become con- Rom. viii.
formable to him ; by which we concur and partake ^{17.}
with him ; yea, by which we may promote, and in
a sort complete, his designs ; *filling up*, as St. Paul Phil. iii. 10.
speaketh, *that which is behind of the afflictions of* Rev. i. 9.
Christ in our flesh ? Who now can much prefer Col. i. 13.
being esteemed, applauded, approved or favoured by ^{18.}
men, before infamy, reproach, derision, or persecu- ^{19.}
tion from them, especially when these do follow con- ^{20.}
scientious adherence to righteousness ? Who can Cogitemus
be very ambitious of worldly honour or repute, co- crucem
vetous of wealth, or greedy of pleasure, who observ- ejus, et di-
eth the only Son of God choosing rather to hang vitiis lu-
upon a cross than to sit upon a throne ; inviting tan putu-
the clamours of spite and scorn, rather than accla- bimus. Hier. Ep. ii.
mations of blessing and praise ; divesting himself of ad Nepot.
all secular pomp, plenty, conveniences and solaces ; Quis bea-
embracing the garb of a slave and the repute of a tam vitam
malefactor, before the dignity and respect of a prince, esse arbit-
which were his due, and which he easily could have tretur in
obtained ? Can we imagine it a very happy thing to iis, que
be high and prosperous in this world, to swim here conte-
nenda esse docuit filius Dei ? Aug. de Ag.
Ch. c. 11.

SER M. in affluence and pleasure ; can we take it for a misery to be mean and low, to conflict with any wants or straits here, seeing the fountain of all happiness did himself condescend to so forlorn a state, and was pleased to become so deep a sufferer ? If with the eyes of our mind we do behold our Lord hanging naked upon a gibbet, besmeared with his own blood, groaning under extreme anguish of pain; encompassed

Isa. 1. 6.

with all sorts of disgraceful abuses, *yielding*, as the prophet foretold of him, *his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them who plucked off the hair, hiding not his face from shame and spitting*; will not the imagination of such a sight dim the lustre of all earthly grandeurs and beauties, damp the sense of all carnal delights and satisfactions, quash all the glee which we can find in any wild frolics or riotous merriments ?

11. It is surely a great commendation of afflictions, and a strong consolation under them, to ponder well this point ; for if hardship was to our Lord ^{"Ephes. 4. 14"} a school of duty, *he*, as the apostle saith, *learning* ^{"by trial."} *obedience from what he suffered*; if it was to him an instrument of perfection, as the same apostle imports ^{"Heb. v. 8."} when he saith, that *it became God to perfect the Captain of our salvation by suffering*; if it was a means of procuring the Divine favour even to him, ^{"Heb. ii. 10."} as those words import, *Therefore the Father loveth me, because I lay down my life*; if it was to him a step unto glory, according to that saying, *Was not Christ to suffer, and so to enter into his glory?* yea, if it was a ground of conferring on him that sublimest pitch of dignity above all creatures, as we are taught; for *because*, saith St. Paul, *he was obedient to death, even the death of the cross, therefore did*

^{"Luke xxiv. 26."}

God exalt him, and gave him a name above every name ; and, We see Jesus, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour ; and, Worthy, crieth out the heavenly society in the Revelations, is the Lamb that was slain, and who redeemed us to God by his blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing ; if affliction did minister such advantages to him ; and if by our conformity to him in undergoing it with like submission, humility, and patience, it may afford the like to us, what reason can there be, that we should anywise be discomposed, discouraged, or disconsolate under it ? Much more reason surely there is, that with St. Paul and all the holy apostles we should boast, rejoice, and exult in our tribulations ; far more cause we have with them to esteem it a favour, a privilege, and an ornament to us, than to be discontented or displeased therewith. To do thus is a duty incumbent on us as Christians ; for he, saith our Master, that doth not take up his cross, and follow me, is not worthy of me : He that doth not carry his cross, and go after me, cannot be my disciple : he that doth not willingly take the cross, when it is presented to him by God's hand ; he that doth not contentedly bear it, when it is by Providence imposed on him, is nowise worthy of the honour to wait on Christ ; he is not capable to be reckoned among the disciples of our heavenly Master ; he is not worthy of Christ, as not having the courage, the constancy, the sincerity required of a Christian ; of one pretending to such great benefits, such high privileges, such excellent rewards, as Christ our Lord and Saviour doth propose ; he cannot be Christ's dis-

Rom. v. 3. -
Col. i. 24.
Matt. v. 12.
Luk. vi. 23.
Pbil. i. 20.
Acta v. 41.
James i. 2.
Heb. x. 34.
1 Pet. i. 7.
Heb. xii. —
1 Cor. i. 4.
Luke xiv.
27. ix. 23.
Matt. x. 38.
xvi. 24.

SERM. ciple, shewing such incapacity to learn those needful
XXVI. lessons of humility and patience dictated by him;

Matt. xi. 29. declaring such an indisposition to transcribe those
copies of submission to Divine will, self-denial and
self-resignation, so fairly set him by the instruction
1 Pet. iv. 1. and example of Christ : *Forasmuch then as Christ
hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves;
likewise with the same mind ; and; Christ suffered
for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow
his steps,* saith St. Peter.

**Naz. Or.
38. ad fin.** 12. The willing susception and the cheerful sus-
tenance of the cross is indeed the express condition,
and the proper character of our Christianity; in sig-
nification whereof it hath been from immemorial
time a constant usage to mark those who enter into

it with the figure of the cross. The cross, as the instrument by which our peace with God was wrought, as the stage whereon our Lord did act the last part of his miraculous obedience, consummating our redemption; as the field wherein the *Captain of our salvation* did achieve his noble victory, and erect his glorious trophies over all the enemies thereof, was well assumed to be the badge of our profession, the ensign of our spiritual warfare, the pledge of our constant adherence to our crucified Saviour; in relation to whom our chief hope is grounded, our

'Εμοὶ μὲν γε great joy and sole glory doth consist ; for, **God forbids**, saith St. Paul, *that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ.*

Gal. vi. 14. *cross of Christ.*

Let it be *to the Jews a scandal*, or offensive to their fancy, prepossessed with expectations of a Messiah flourishing in secular pomp and prosperity ; let it be *folly to the Greeks*, or seem absurd to men imbued (puffed up, corrupted) with fleshly notions and

maxims of worldly craft, disposing men to value nothing which is not grateful to present sense or fancy; SERM. XXVI. that God should put his own most beloved Son into so very sad and despicable a condition; that salvation from death and misery should be procured by so miserable a death; that eternal joy, glory, and happiness should issue from these fountains of extreme sorrow and shame; that a person in external semblance devoted to so opprobrious and slavish usage should be the Lord and Redeemer of mankind, the King and Judge of all the world; let this doctrine, I say, be scandalous and distasteful to some persons tainted with prejudice; let it appear strange and incredible to others blinded with self-conceit; let all the proud, all the profane, all the inconsiderate part of mankind slight and reject it; yet to us it must appear grateful and joyous; to us it is *πιστὸς λόγος*, *a* ^{1 Tim. i. 15.} *faithful* (and credible) *proposition, worthy of all* ^{2 Tim. ii. 11.} *acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world thus to save sinners:* to us, who discern by a clearer light, and are endued with a purer sense, kindled by the divine Spirit, from whence, with comfortable satisfaction of mind, we may apprehend and taste that God could not in a higher measure, or a fitter manner, illustrate his glorious attributes of goodness and justice, his infinite grace and mercy toward his poor creatures, his holy displeasure against wickedness, his impartial severity in punishing iniquity and impiety, or in vindicating his own honour and authority, than by thus ordering his Son to suffer for us; that also true virtue and goodness could not otherwise be taught, be exemplified, be commended ^{Grot. de Ver. iv. 12.} and impressed with greater advantage.

SERM. XXVI. We might allege the suffrages of eminent philosophers, persons esteemed most wise by improvement of natural light, who have declared, that perfection of virtue can hardly be produced or expressed otherwise than by undergoing most sharp afflictions and tortures^a; and that God therefore, as a wise Father, is wont with them to exercise those whom he best loveth: we might also produce instances of divers persons, even among Pagans^b, most famous and honourable in the judgment of all posterity for their singular virtue and wisdom, who were tried in this furnace, and thereby shone most brightly; their suffering, by the iniquity and ingratitude, by the envy and malignity of their times, in their reputation, liberty, and life; their undergoing foul slanders, infamous punishments, and ignominious deaths, more than any other practices of their life, recommending them to the regard and admiration of future ages^c; although none of them, as our Lord, did suffer of choice, or upon design to advance the interests of goodness, but upon constraint, and irresistible force put on them; none of them did suffer in a manner so signal, with circumstances so rare, and with events so wonderful; yet suffering as they did was their

^a Plat. de Rep. ii. p. 594.

'Magnum exemplum, nisi mala fortuna non invenit. Sen. de Prov. iii. Plut. de Stoic. contr. p. 1931.

^b Socrates, Phocion, Thraceas, Aristides, &c. Vid. Ælian. Var. xi. 9. 2. 43.

^c Cicutæ Socratem magnum fecit, &c. Sen. Ep. 13, et 67, et 104. (Sen. Ep. 81. Ep. 113.)

Rutilii innocentia ac virtus lateret, nisi accepisset injuriam; dum violatur effusit. Sen. Ep. 79.

chief glory ; whence it seemeth, that even according to the sincerest dictates of common wisdom this dispensation was not so unaccountable ; nor ought the Greeks, in consistency with themselves, and in respect to their own admired philosophy, to have deemed our doctrine of the cross foolish, or unreasonable.

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To conclude ; since thereby a charity and humanity so unparalleled, (far transcending theirs who have been celebrated for devoting their lives out of love to their country, or kindness to their friends,) a meekness so incomparable, a resolution so invincible, a patience so heroical, were manifested for the instruction and direction of men ; since never were the vices and the vanities of the world (so prejudicial to the welfare of mankind) so remarkably disparaged ; since never any suffering could pretend to so worthy and beneficial effects, the expiation of the whole world's sin, and reconciliation of mankind to God, such as no performance beside, nor any other sacrifice did ever aim to procure ; since, in fine, no virtue had ever so glorious rewards, as sovereign dignity to him that exercised it, and eternal happiness to those who imitate it ; since, I say, there be such excellent uses and fruits of the cross borne by our blessed Saviour, we can have no reason to be offended at it, or ashamed of it ; but with all reason heartily we should approve and humbly adore, as well the deep wisdom of God, as all other his glorious attributes, illustriously displayed therein : to whom therefore, as is most due, let us devoutly render all thanks, all praise, and glory.

And, *Unto him that loved us, and washed us* Rev. i. 5, 6.
from our sins in his blood, and hath made us kings

SER.M. *and priests unto God and his Father; to him be
XXVI. glory and dominion for ever and ever.*

Rev. v. 13. *Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be
unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto
the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.*

Dead and Buried.

S E R M O N XXVII.

1 COR. xv. 3.

For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures.

ST. Paul, meaning in this chapter to maintain a SERM. very fundamental point of our religion (*the resurrection of the dead*) against some infidels or heretics, who among the Corinthians, his scholars in the faith, did oppose it; doth, in order to the proof of his assertion, and refutation of that pernicious error, premise those doctrines, which he having received both from relation of the other apostles, and by immediate revelation from God himself, had delivered unto them, *ἐπώτερος, in the first place,* or among the prime things; that is, as most eminent and important points of Christian doctrine; the truth whereof consequently (standing upon the same foundations with Christianity itself, upon Divine revelation and apostolical testimony) could nowise be disputed of, or doubted, by any good Christian. Of which doctrines (the collection of which he styleth *the Gospel*; that Gospel, by embracing and retaining which they were, he saith, *to be saved*) the first is that in our text, concerning the *death of our Lord*, undergone by him for our salvation: which point, as of all others in our religion it is of peculiar

SERM. consequence, so it much concerneth us both firmly
 XXVII. to believe it and well to understand it; for it is by
^{Rom. iii. 25.} *faith in his blood* that we are *justified*, and by
^{1 Cor. ii. 2.} *knowing Christ crucified* we shall be chiefly edified;
^{Rom. i. 16.} *the word* imparting this knowledge being *the power*
^{Philip. iii. 10.} *of God to salvation*. It therefore I mean now, by
 God's assistance, to explain and apply; the which
 I shall do generally and absolutely; without any
 particular accommodation of my Discourse to the
 words of this text; yet so as to comprehend all the
 particulars observable in them. The death of our
 Lord then is my subject, and about it I shall con-
 sider, 1. Its nature, or wherein it did consist. 2.
 Some peculiar adjuncts and respects thereof, which
 commend it to our regard, and render it considerable
 to us. 3. The principles and (impressive and meri-
 torious) causes thereof. 4. The ends which it aimed
 at; together with the fruits and effects of it. 5. Some
 practical influences, which the consideration thereof
 may and should have upon us.

1. As for the nature of it we must affirm, and
 believe assuredly, that it was a true and proper
 death; in kind not different from that death, to the
 which all we mortal creatures are by the law and
 condition of our nature subject, and which we must
^{Ps. lxxxix. 48.} all sometime undergo; for, *What man is he that liveth and shall not see death; that shall deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? that death,* which is signified by cessation from vital operations; (of all motions natural or voluntary, of all sense and knowledge, appetite and passion;) *that death,* which is caused by violent disunion, or dislocation, by dis-tempering, or however indisposing the parts, humours, spirits of the body, so that the soul can no

longer in them and by them continue to exercise those functions, for which its conjunction thereto was intended, and cannot therefore fitly reside therein^a; *that death*, which is supposed to consist in the dissolution of that vital band, whatever it be, whereby the soul is linked and united to the body; or in that which is thereupon consequent, the separation, department, and absence of the soul from the body; each of that couple, upon their divorce, returning home to their original principles, as it were; the body *to the earth from whence it was taken*, and *the spirit unto God who gave it*. Such causes antecedent are specified in the story; such signs following are plainly implied, such a state is expressed in the very terms, whereby our death is commonly signified: the same extremity of anguish, the same dilaceration of parts, the same effusion of blood, which would destroy our vital temper, quench our natural heat, stop our animal motions, exhaust our spirits, and force out our breath, did work upon him; necessarily producing the like effects on him, as who had assumed the common imperfections and infirmities of our nature; in regard to which violences inflicted upon him he is said, *ἀποκτείνεσθαι, to be killed or slain*; *διαχειρίζεσθαι, to be despatched*; *ἀναρεῖσθαι, to be made away*; *ἀπολέσθαι, to perish, or be destroyed*; *ἔξολοθρεύεσθαι, to be cut off*, as it is in Daniel; *σφάττεσθαι, to be slaughtered*; *θίεσθαι, to be sacrificed*; which words do all of them fully import a real and proper death to have ensued upon those violent usages toward him.

And by the ordinary signs of death, apparent to

^a ——'Επεὶ κε πρῶτα λίτη λεῖκ' δοτέα θυμός.
Ψυχὴ δ', ἡντ' ὄνειρος, ἀποκταμένη πεπτηγα. Hom. Od. A. 220.

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Gen. iii. 19.
Eccles. xii.

Ps. cix. 29.

Acts iii. 15.
viii. 33.

Dan. ix. 26.
Isa. liii. 8.

John xviii.
4. xi. 50.

Rev. v. 9.

SER M. sense, the soldiers judged him dead ; and therefore,
 XXVII. ὡς εἶδον αὐτὸν ἦδη τεθηκότα, *seeing him already dead,*

John xix. 33. *they forbear to break his legs :* by the same all the world was satisfied thereof ; both his spiteful enemies, that stood with delight, waiting for this utmost success of their malicious endeavours to destroy him ; and his loving friends, who with compassionate respect attended upon him through the course of his suffering ; and those who were ready to perform their last offices of kindness, in procuring a decent interment of his body.

His transition also, and abiding in this state, are expressed by terms declaring the propriety of his death, and its agreement with our death. St. Mark Mark xv. telleth us, that ἐξέπνευσε, *animam efflavit*, he expired, Matt. xxvii. 50. breathed out his soul, or his last breath ; St. Matthew, ἀφῆκε τὸ πνεῦμα, *animam egit*, he let go his spirit, or *gave up the ghost* ; St. John, παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα, *he delivered up his spirit* into God's hand ; the which St. Luke expresseth done with a formal Luke xxiii. resignation ; *Father*, said he, *into thy hands I commend* (or I depose) *my spirit* ; he doth also himself μεταβασι. frequently express his dying by *laying down his life*, and *bestowing it as a ransom*, which sheweth John xv. 13. x. 15, 18. xiii. 37. 1 John iii. 6. him really to have parted with it.

His death also (as ours is wont to be denoted by like phrases) is termed ἔξοδος, *excessus e vivis*, a going out of life, or from the society of men ; (for Luke ix. 31. Moses and Elias are said to tell, τὴν ἔξοδον αὐτοῦ, *his 2 Pet. i. 15. decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem;*) Acts xx. 29. and μετάβασις, a passing over, or translation from John xiii. 1. this into another world ; (*When*, saith St. John, *Jesus knew that his time was come, ἵνα μεταβῇ, that he should depart from this world.*) His death also

is enigmatically described by the *destruction* or SERM. molishment of *his* bodily *temple*, answerable to XXVII. those circumlocutions concerning our ordinary death; John ii. 19. *e dissolution of our earthly house of tabernacle*,^{Matt. xxvi. 61.}
^{2 Cor. v. 1.} transitory abode, in St. Paul; the ἀπόθεσις τοῦ σκηνῶτος, laying down, or putting off our tabernacle,^{2 Pet. i. 14.} St. Peter.

It were also not hard to shew, how all other rases and circumlocutions, by which human death expressed, either in holy scripture or in usual language, or among philosophers and more accurate speakers, are either expressly applied, or by consequence are plainly applicable to the death of our Saviour; such, for instance, as these in scripture; ἀνάτησις, being resolved into our principles, or the returning of them thither whence they came; ἀπόλυσις, being freed, licensed, or dismissed hence; ἐκδημία τοῦ σώματος, a going, or abode abroad; a peregrination, or absentment from the body; an ἔκδυσις, putting off, or being divested of the body; and ἀφανίσης, disappearance, or cessation in appearance to ; a going hence, and not being seen; a falling asleep, resting from our labours, sleeping with our fathers, being added, and gathered to our fathers; being taken, or cut off out of the land of the living; going down into the pit; lying down, stinging, sleeping in the dust; making our bed in darkness: these and the like phrases occurring in scripture (which might be paralleled out of vulgar speech, and out of learned discourses) describing either the entrance into, or the abiding in the state that death, to which all men are obnoxious, might sily be shewed applicable to the death of our Saviour. His resurrection doth imply the reality of

SERM. his death ; for otherwise it had not been miraculous,
XXVII. it had not been a pledge of our resurrection. But I
will not further needlessly insist upon explicating, or
confirming a point so clear, and never misunderstood,
or questioned, except by some wild and presumptuous
heretics.

Our Saviour's death then was a true, real, and
proper death, suitable to that frail, passible, and
mortal nature, which he vouchsafed to undergo for
Rom. viii. 3. us ; to the condition of *sinful flesh, in the likeness*
whereof he did appear; severing his soul and body,
and remitting them to their original sources ; his
passion was indeed *ultimum supplicium*, an extreme
capital punishment, the highest, in the last result,
which in this world either the fiercest injustice or
Matt. x. 28. the severest justice could inflict : for, *to kill the body*
Luke xii. 4. is, as our Lord himself taught, the utmost limit of
all human power and malice ; the most and worst
that man can do ; they have not *περισσότερόν τι*, any
thing beyond that which they can attempt upon us ;
and so far did they proceed with our Lord. Such
was the nature of his death ; such indeed as was
requisite for the accomplishment of the ends and
effects designed thereby.

2. Let us now consider those peculiar adjuncts and
respects of our Lord's death, (together with his whole
passion, whereof his death was the chief part and
final completion,) the which do commend it to our re-
gard, and amplify the worth thereof ; such are, 1. Its
being a result of God's eternal resolution and decree.
2. Its being a matter of free consent and compact
between God the Father and his only Son. 3. Its
being anciently prefigured and predicted. 4. Its being
executed by God's hand and providence guiding and

overning it; and by man's action concurring. 5. Its SERM.
being the death of a person so holy and innocent, so XXVII.
high and excellent, of God's Son, of God the Son.

1. It was a result of God's eternal counsel and ecree; it was no casual event, no expedient suddenly devised, or slipt from providence, but a well-
id design, from all eternity contrived by divine
isdom, resolved upon by divine goodness. As God
id (by the incomprehensible perfection of his na-
ire) from thence foresee our lapse and misery, so
e did as soon determine our remedy and means
f salvation. As the whole of that mysterious dis-
ensation concerning Christ, so especially did this
ain part thereof proceed κατὰ πρόθεσιν τῶν αἰώνων, ac- Ephes. iii.
ording to an eternal purpose, as St. Paul speak-
h; for our Saviour was *a Lamb slain* (in designa- Rev. xiii. 8.
on irrevocable slain) *from the foundation of the*
orlōd; as it is said in the Revelation: and, *We, i Pet. i. 19.*
ith St. Peter, were redeemed by the precious blood
f Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and with-
ut spot, προεγνωσμένου μὲν, foreordained indeed be-
re the foundation of the world: and our Saviour
ent, as he telleth us himself, to suffer, κατὰ τὸ ὅριον Luke xxii.
μένον, according to what was determined: and, *It* ^{22.} Acts ii. 23
as by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge
f God, saith St. Peter, that he was delivered up
ito those wicked hands that slew him; nor did the
onspiracy of Herod and Pilate, with the nation
nd people of the Jews, effect any thing about it,
eyond ὅσα ἡ χεὶρ, καὶ ἡ βουλὴ Θεοῦ προώρισε γενέσθαι, Acts iv. 28.
hatever the hand and counsel of God (or God's
fectual purpose) had predetermined to come to
ass. Such an especial care and providence of
od, concerning this matter, so expressly and so

SER.M. frequently recommended to our observation, do argue the very great moment and high worth thereof. What God declareth himself to have had so early and earnest a care of, must be matter of highest consideration and importance.

2. It was a matter of free consent and compact between God and his Son. God did freely and graciously (out of merciful regard to our welfare) proffer, that if he would please to undertake to redeem his (lost and enslaved) creature, an honourable and comfortable success to his enterprise; that he would accept his performances, and that the design should prosper in his hand: he did willingly embrace the proposal, and applied himself to the performance:

Isa. liii. 9. When thou shalt make thy soul an offering for sin, thou shalt see thy seed, and prolong thy days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in thy hand: thou shalt see of the travail of thy soul, and shalt be satisfied; that, in the prophet's language,

Heb. x. 7,8. was God's proposition: and, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God; that was our Saviour's reply in correspondence and consent thereto. God, in consideration of what our Lord would obediently suffer, did,

Luke xxii. 29. as our Saviour telleth us, διατίθεσθαι βασιλείαν, covenant to him a kingdom; committing a sovereign authority, assigning an universal dominion to him;

Heb. ii. 9. in virtue of which transaction it was that Jesus, for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory and

Isa. liii. 12. honour; that because he poured out his soul unto death, God divided him a portion with the great;

Phil. ii. 8,9. that he being obedient to the death, God exalted Rom. xiv. 9. him, and gave him a name above all names. In

this regard are God's elect and faithful people said to be given unto him as a retribution to him, who

gave himself for them ; (Thine they were, saith SERM. our Lord to his Father, and thou gavest them me ;) XXVII.
 hence are we said to be *bought with a price* ; hence John xvii. 6.
is the church purchased by his blood : there was Gal. iii. 13.
 therefore a covenant and bargain driven between ^{1 Cor. vi.}
_{20.} God and his Son concerning this affair ; and of ^{1 Pet. i. 19.}
_{Acts xx. 28.} huge consideration surely must that affair be, where-
 in such persons do so deeply interest themselves,
 trafficking, and, as it were, standing upon terms
 with one another.

3. That the great excellency and efficacy of our Saviour's death and passion might appear, it was by manifold types foreshadowed, and in divers prophe-
 cies foretold. Indeed most of the famous passages of providence (especially the signal afflictions of eminent persons representing our Saviour) do seem to have been prefigurations of, or preludes to, his passion.
 The blood of the righteous protomartyr Abel, shed Gen. iv. 10.
 by an envious brother, for acceptable obedience per- Luke xi. 51.
 formed by him to God's will, and *crying to heaven*, might prefigure that blood, which cried also, although with another voice, *speaking better things than the blood of Abel*; not sad complaints, and suits for Heb. xii. 24.
_{xii. 4.} vengeance, but sweet entreaties and intercessions for mercy. Isaac, the only son, *the son of promise*, his Heb. xi. 7.
_{19.} oblation in purpose, or *death in parable*, as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh, did plainly repre-
 sent our Saviour, the promised seed, his being really offered, and afterward miraculously restored to life. Joseph's being sold, and put into slavery by his en-
 vious brethren, being slanderously accused, and shut in prison, (*whose feet they hurt with fetters*; the iron Paul. cv. 18.
entered into his soul;) and this by God's disposal in order to his exaltation; and that he might be a

S E R M. means of preserving life, and preparing a convenient
 XXVII. habitation for the children of Israel, doth well re-

Gen. xliv. 5. Luke xxiv. 26. Heb. v. 9. John xiv. 2. semble him, who *by suffering entered into his glory*; who *thereby being perfected, became author of salvation to his brethren, all true Israelites*; who *went to prepare mansions of rest and light, a heavenly Goshen, for them.* David's persecutions foregoing his royal dignity and prosperous state; which

Psal. xviii. 4. he expresseth in such strains as these; *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; the sorrows of hell compassed me about, and the snares of death prevented me;* how they may adumbrate the more real extremities of our Lord's afflictions, previous to his glorious exaltation, I leave you to consider; as also the rest of such passages, having a mysterious importance accommodable to this purpose. However, all the sacrifices of old, instituted by God, we may with fuller confidence affirm to have been chiefly preparatory unto and prefigurative of this most true

Heb. ix. 23. viii. 5. and perfect sacrifice; by virtue whereof indeed those *ὑποδείγματα, and σκιαι,* umbratic representations (or insinuations) did obtain their substance, validity, and effect: if they did not signify this in design, they

Heb. ix. 22. Levit. xiii. 11. could signify nothing in effect; for as *without shedding of blood there was no remission,* (God's anger would not be appeased, nor his justice satisfied without it; it being *blood, which, according to God's prescription, did make atonement for the soul,*) as the appointment of those sacrifices did speak and signify;

Heb. x. 4. ix. 9, 15. x. 11. so *it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin;* that those *legal gifts and sacrifices should perfect the conscience of him that did the service;* that is, should entirely as-

ire him of pardon and impunity, or raise in him a SERM
rong and clear hope of God's favour : the lives of XXVII.
east were not in value answerable, nor could fitly
e subrogated instead of men's souls, which had of-
ended, and thence were liable to death ; the effu-
on of their blood could not reasonably satisfy a
ian's conscience, sensible of guilt and fearful of
od's displeasure, that by it God was fully appeased;
hey must therefore refer unto a *κρέττων θυσία*, a more ^{Heb. ix. 23.}
excellent sacrifice ; one more sufficient in itself, and
ore acceptable to God ; in virtue of which, and in
egard thereto, sin might be thoroughly expiated,
od's wrath might be propitiated, divine vengeance
ight be removed, the mind of man therefore might
e comforted and contented. The high priest's en-
rance once a year into the holy of holies, *not with-* ^{Heb. ix. 7.}
ut blood to atone for his own and the people's ig- ^{x. 24.}
orances, (or miscarriages,) did imply, that our *great*
High Priest should make one bloody atonement for
he offences of mankind, and, passing through the
eil of mortal flesh, should enter into the true *sanc-*
um sanctorum of heaven, there to *appear in the*
resence of God for us ; exhibiting the virtue of his
ieritorious passion, together with his effectual inter-
ession for mercy toward us. Especially the paschal
imb, in its substance, (as a lamb, meek and gentle,)
its quality, (as without blemish and spot, pure
nd innocent,) in its manner of preparation and
ressing, (being killed by all the assembly, having
s blood sprinkled upon the doors of every house,
eing roasted with fire, having bitter herbs for its
auce,) with other observable circumstances about it,
as a most apposite emblem of *Christ our passover*; ^{1 Cor. v. 7.}
ho not only by his death did signify, and mind us

SER.M. of, but did really achieve our deliverance from the mystical Egypt, our state of spiritual bondage. So

XXVII. did ancient types exhibit and represent; plain predictions also did express the same death and suf-

Acts iii. 18. fering of our Lord: *Those things*, saith St. Peter, *which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled*; not one prophet only, not some few; but

all, saith he, (that is, either plainly or covertly, either directly or by consequence,) *have foreshewed* (or foretold) it: it is our negligence, or stupidity, if we do not discern it in them; as our Lord intimated,

Luke xxiv. 25. 26. when he thus spake to his disciples: *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ought not Christ* (ought he not, according to their presignifications and predictions) *to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?*

That David, an illustrious representative of the Messias, doth often describe as belonging to himself, mortal agonies and sufferings, not well applicable

Psal. xxii. cix. &c. *κατὰ λέξιν*, or in direct historical meaning, to his own person, and therefore in reason, according to a more

high and perfect sense, to be understood of the Messias himself; that Daniel plainly foretelleth, that in a certain time the Messias *should be cut off*; that Isaiah doth in several places insinuate, and in the famous 53rd chapter of his prophecy doth clearly describe, the manner and kind of our Saviour's passion, is so evident, that even those of the Jewish doctors, who have been most earnest opposers of our Lord, have been forced to acknowledge, that there is to be as well one Messias to suffer, as another to prosper, and reign in glory; being so gross as not to apprehend, or so perverse as not to acknowledge, the con-

istency between antecedent suffering and consequent ^{SER.M.}
glory ; between a night of *darkness* and sorrow, and ^{XXVII.}
a day of night and joy breaking out from it ; not ^{Luke xxii.}
being able or willing to distinguish between an external pomp in this world, and an external majesty
in the future state. But unto us God's so forward
care, *by the spirit of Christ in his prophets*, ^{xpo-} Pet. i. 11.
uaptrípeorau to forewitness (as St. Peter speaketh, or
to testify beforehand) *the sufferings of our Saviour,*
and the glories succeeding, doth imply, with what
diligence of attention we should regard, with what
firmness of faith we should embrace, with what satis-
faction of heart we should entertain this great and
admirable dispensation.

4. We may consider, that this death was com-
passed by God's especial providence directing and
disposing it, although not without the active con-
currence of men : the treacherous disposition and
covetous appetite of Judas ; the envious humour and
blind zeal of the scribes and priests ; the wanton
fickleness and wild rudeness of the people ; the fear-
ful and selfish temper of the governor, were but in-
struments whereby God's *own hand* did inflict this ^{Acts iv. 28.}
sore chastisement upon his Son for us : it was *the* Isa. lxxi. 6,
Lord that laid upon him the iniquities of us all ;⁴
by God he was stricken, smitten, and afflicted ;
Pilate, it is said, *had no power* to do what he did, John xix.
but what was given him from above ; the Jews^{11.}
with their rulers proceeded rashly and ignorantly ;
otherwise, as St. Paul affirmeth, *they would not have* ^{1 Cor. ii. 8.}
crucified the Lord of glory ; but God advisedly, as ^{Acts iii. 17.}
St. Peter told them, *did accomplish it* ; *He did not* ^{Rom. viii. 32.}
spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us :
he, as it were, suspended his bowels of pity toward

SERM. him, he withdrew his face of kindness from him,
XXVII. out of compassion and benignity toward us; he used him severely, that he might deal favourably with us.

Yet did man actively concur therein; all mankind in a sort, by its representatives, was involved, as principally in the guilt for which, so in the guilt by which he suffered; there was a general conspiracy of Jew and Gentile practised against the life of their common Saviour. *Of a truth, saith St. Peter, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, were gathered together both Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and with the people of Israel:* in the Jews the horrid ingratitude of men, in the Gentiles their wretched infirmity did appear; the which, by their active efficacy toward our Lord's death, did signify the meritorious influence they also had upon it; that it was our iniquity and corruption which did cause it: so as a work of divine Providence, (the most admirable work ever accomplished by Providence,) as an act of human pravity, (the most heinous act ever committed by men,) is the death of our Lord considerable.

5. But more immediately the quality and condition of our Saviour's person do most commend to us, and advance the worth of his death: if, as the Psalmist saith, *precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;* if the spotless candour and unblemished integrity of a lamb do make its *blood precious,* and qualify it for an acceptable sacrifice; how valuable to God shall be the death of a person so perfectly holy and innocent; who did not so much as *know sin;* in whose mouth no guile was ever found; who was *holy, harmless, undefiled, removed* (at infinite distance removed) *from sinners;* who

Psal. cxvi.

15. lxxii.

14.

1 Pet. i. 19.

2 Cor. v. 21.

1 Pet. ii. 22.

1 John iii. 5.

Isa. liii. 9.

Heb. vii.

26, 27.

eded not to offer sacrifices for his own sins; SERM.
whose death therefore for others was apt to be more XXVII.
available and acceptable! Again, if the life of a king
^{2Sam. xviii. 3. xxii. 17.}
(as king David's people told him) worth ten thou-
nd lives; if it be a most enormous crime and
ghest treason to imagine his death; how valuable
ust be the death of a person so incomparably
ascendent in dignity, of the Lord of glory, of
e Prince of life! Ye denied the holy and the
^{Acts iii. 15.}
st one; ye slew the Prince of life: They cruci-
^{1 Cor. ii. 8.}
d the Lord of glory: so the apostles do aggra-
ite the business. But a further height, a perfect
mensity indeed, of worth and efficacy, must needs
crue to the death of our Saviour, from his being
e Son of God; from his being God, (one and the
me in nature with his almighty and all-glorious
ather:) for it is the blood of Christ, the Son
^{1 John i. 7.}
^{Rev. i. 5, 6.}
God, which purgeth us from all sin; yea,
od himself did, as St. Paul saith in the Acts,
^{Acts xx. 28.}
urchase the church with his own blood; it is the
^{Tit. ii. 14.}
reat God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who
ive himself for us, that he might redeem us from
ll iniquity: and, Hereby, saith St. John, perceive
^{1 John iii. 16.}
e the love of God, because he laid down his life
r us. That the immortal God should die, that the
lost High should be debased to so low a condition,
it cannot be heard without wonder, so it could
t be undertaken without huge reason, nor accom-
ished without mighty effect: well indeed might
ch a condescension serve to advance us from the
isest state to any pitch of honour and happiness;
ell might one drop of that royal blood of heaven
ffice to purchase many worlds, to ransom innu-
erable lives of men, to expiate an infinity of sins,

SERM. however grievous and foul. But so much for the
XXVII. peculiar adjuncts and respects of our Lord's death.

3. Let us now consider the causes and principles whence it proceeded; which moved God to determine it, and our Lord to undertake it; they were in both acts most voluntary and free: of the Father *Isa. liii. 10.* it is said, *It pleased the Lord to bruise him;* and, *Ps. xl. 7, 9. Behold,* saith our Lord in the Psalm, *I come to do thy will, O God;* that is, as the Apostle to the Hebrews expoundeth it, to offer, not the blood of beasts in sacrifice, but my own body, according to thy will *John x. 18.* and appointment: and, *This commandment,* saith he in St. John, *I received of my Father, to lay down my life:* and, *The cup,* saith he again, *which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* so on the Father's part, and on our Saviour's *John x. 18.* likewise, it was no less voluntary; for, *None,* saith he, *taketh my life from me,* (that is, it is not from any necessity or compulsion that I do part with it,) *but I lay it down of myself,* (with absolute choice *John vi. 51.* and freedom;) *I have power to lay it down, and I Matt. xxi. 28.* *have power to resume it:* and, *The bread,* saith he, *Gal. ii. 20, which I shall give, is my flesh, which I shall give &c.* *Tit. ii. 14. for the life of the world:* *The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many.* The yielding his flesh to death, the paying his life a ransom, were deeds of gift, perfectly free: and that both in regard to God the Father and the Son this performance was voluntary, St. Paul together thus expresseth; *Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:* so this death issued from the joint wills of God and his Son. But as the volitions of every intelligent and wise agent

o always proceed from some principle inclining, or SERM.
re directed according to some impulsive cause mov- XXVII.
ng to them, so divers principles and causes of these
voluntary acts are declared in scripture ; the chief of
which are reducible to these two ; one internally
disposing God's goodness ; the other externally in-
iting man's distress. The case stood thus : man-
kind lying in a sad and forlorn estate, oppressed by
satán, enslaved to sin, subject to a rigorous law,
xposed to the severity of justice, tormented by the
ense of guilt, fearful of divine wrath and due ven-
geance ; in short, by the sentence of heaven and by
the suffrage of conscience within, condemned to pu-
nishment unavoidable, and to intolerable misery ;
man, I say, lying in so desperately uncomfortable a
ondition, God's infinite goodness regarded his poor
reature, his *bowels of compassion* yearned toward ^{Διὰ σελάδη-}
im, a desire of relieving sprang up in his will ; ^{χριτισμός.} Luke i. 78.
hence was he moved to provide such a remedy,
uitable and sufficient for his delivery ; for the re-
moving all those mischiefs and curing all those dis-
empers : the main source of all this wonderful per-
ormance, (as of all other providential dispensations
nd works, *ad extra*,) was that most excellent per-
ection of God, which, in regard to this matter, is
ometime termed *χρηστότης*, benignity, or bounty ; Tit. iii. 4.
Implying the great benefit and advantage we do Rom. ii. 4.
hence receive ; sometimes grace, or favour, signify- Eph. ii. 7.
ng the pure freeness in dispensing it, without any Heb. ii. 9.
esign of profit to himself, or any desert on our part, Rom. iii. 24.
By the grace of God he tasted death for every ^{2 Cor. viii.}
ian;) sometimes mercy, denoting our bad deserts, Tit. iii. 5.
r obnoxiousness to justice and punishment ; some- Luke i. 78.
imes pity, signifying the great need we had thereof, Eph. ii. 4.
Heb. ii. 17.

SERM. by reason of our extreme distress and misery. Com-
XXVII. monly also it is, by the most obliging and endearing
 name styled love, and philanthropy, intimating the
 earnest regard and benevolence God had to us as
 his creatures, and as capable of being benefited and
^{1 Tim. ii. 6.} bettered by him; *Herein*, saith St. Paul, *God com-*
^{Tit. iii. 4.} *mended his love toward us, in that we being yet*
^{Rom. v. 8.} *sinners, Christ died for us;* and, *God,* saith St.
^{Eph. ii. 4.}
^{1 John iv. 9, 10.} *John, loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitia-*
^{John iii. 16,} *tion for us;* and, *God,* saith our Lord himself, *so*
^{17.} *loved the world, that he gave his only begotten*
Son—that the world might be saved by him.

By the way it is worth observing, that there is
 distinguishable a threefold love of God toward men,
 intimated in scripture. 1. A general love to man-
 kind, antecedent to the sending our Lord, and his
 performances, being the ground of God's designing
 them; which may be called a love of pity, or mercy
 toward poor man lying under condemnation and
 distress; this is that φιλανθρωπία τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Θεοῦ,
^{Tit. iii. 4.} *philanthropy of God our Saviour, which appeared*
in saving us, (that is, in granting us the capacity
 and means of salvation,) *not by works of righteous-*
ness, which we had done, but by his mercy; the
^{Rom. v. 8.} *love which he commended, in that while we were*
sinners Christ died for us. 2. A love, immediately
 consequent upon our Lord's performances and suf-
 ferings, and procured by them; whereby God is so
 far pleased with men, and reconciled to the world,
^{1 Tim. ii. 4.} *that he desireth all men's salvation, and offereth to*
^{Tit. ii. 11.} *them terms and means thereof;* in regard to which
 our Lord is said to be the Saviour of the world, and
^{1 Tim. ii. 6.} *Redeemer of all men;* of which love St. Paul speak-
^{iv. 10.} *eth, when he saith, that being enemies we were re-*
^{Rom. v. 10.}

*conciled to God by the death of his Son; and that SERM.
God was in Christ reconciling the world unto him-* XXVII.
self, not imputing their sins; and that God having 2 Cor. v. 19.
made peace by the blood of his cross, did reconcile Col. i. 20.
by him all things unto himself, whether they be John i. 17.
things in earth, or things in heaven; the which Acts x. 33.
may be called a love of reconciliation and favour; Rom. xi. 32.
or the grace of God, which came by Jesus Christ. Luke ii. 14. 1 Tim. ii. 4.

3. A peculiar love of friendship and complacence, which God beareth toward all those who do sincerely turn and steadfastly adhere to him, repenting of their sins and embracing the gospel, and persisting in obedience to his laws; such God is every where represented to affect with tenderest love, as his faithful servants, his good friends, and dear children; being *especially the Saviour of them*: this 1 Tim. iv. 10. distinction is observable for our better understanding the passages of scripture concerning this matter; in which God is sometime represented as bearing a general love to all men, sometime as more especially loving the faithful and good men.

The like principles and impulsive causes are said to move our Lord to undertake and undergo death for us; it was goodness and love toward us that inclined him thereto: *Christ, saith St. Paul, loved us,* Eph. v. 2. *and delivered up himself for us, an offering and* ^{25.} *sacrifice to God: He loved the church, and deli-* Rev. i. 5. *vered up himself for it. He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood: Hereby we perceive* 1 John iii. 16. *the love of God, because he laid down his life for us:* (John xv.) *I live, saith St. Paul again, by the faith of the Son* ^{13.)} Gal. ii. 20. *of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

Such were the principles disposing, and causes in a sort moving; to which we may add our sins, as

SERM. the meritorious causes of our Saviour's death; *He XXVII. died for our sins; He was wounded for our trans-*

¹ Cor. xv. 3. *gressions, he was bruised for our iniquities.* He Heb. x. 12. Isa. liii. 5, died for us, not only as for men, not only as for 6.

² Cor. v. 15. wretched men, but as for unjust and sinful men; as Rom. v. 6, for enemies, and strangers to God; such as had 8, 10.

¹ Pet. iii. 18. grievously displeased God, had incurred heinous guilt, had deserved, and were become obnoxious to severest punishment; so standing in need of reconciliation, propitiation, and redemption. Had we been innocent and guiltless, there had wanted sufficient cause, or just reason for his death; God would not have been angry, justice could have had no pretence, or hold; we should not have been liable to suffer ourselves, nor could he have suffered for us.

Rom. vi. 23. Death is the debt, or *wages due to sin*; which he therefore paid, because we owed it, and could not Isa. liii. 6, discharge it: *All we, as it is said in the prophet, 4, 11. have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord (therefore) hath laid on him the iniquity of us all:* our sins were not only indirect or remote occasions of his death; but did procure it in way of desert: even as they would have been meritorious causes of our death, had he not undertaken for us, so were they the like causes of his death, who died for us, and in our stead; who

² Cor. v. 21. *was made sin* (that is, a sinner, or a sacrifice) for

^{21.} ¹ Tim. ii. 6. *us;* who gave himself ἀντίλυτρον, a ransom instead Matt. xx. 28. *of us all;* paying his blood a price for us, and re-

¹ Cor. vi. 23. ^{20. vii. 23.} redeeming us thereby from all the penalties and in-

Heb. ix. 12. ^{Gal. iii. 13.} conveniences we were liable to; *buying us from the*

¹ Pet. i. 18. ^{Rom. iii. 24.} *curse, by becoming a curse for us;* who had upon

² Pet. ii. 1. ^{Eph. i. 7.} *him the chastisement of our peace;* and did offer Col. i. 14. *up his soul an offering and sacrifice for our sins;*

ereby *expiating them*, propitiating God's wrath, SERM.
d reconciling God unto us, *purgings us* from guilt, XXVII.
d procuring entire remission for our sins; the which Isa. liii. 5,
nsiderations do sufficiently argue our sins, in way Heb. x. 12.
desert, to have been the causes of his death. 10. 1 John ii. 2.
iv. 10.

Now for the ends which our Lord's death aimeth Rom. iii. 25.
and the effects which it produceth, (these we Heb. ii. 17.
n, because in reality they are the same,) they, in 1 Cor. v.
ipture reckoning and expression, are various and 19.
ny: the most general are these, comprehending Eph. ii. 16.
vers others subordinate to them. Heb. ix. 14.
23, 26. John iii. 36.
Matt. xxvi. 28.

1. The illustration of God's glory, by demonstrat- Col. i. 14.
g and displaying therein his most excellent attri- 1 John i. 7.
ties and perfections; so doth St. Paul teach us; Rev. i. 5.
'*hom God, saith he, hath set forth a propitiation* Rom. iii. 5.
faith in his blood, εἰς ἐδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ, Eph. ii. 7.
a demonstration of his righteousness; that is, Col. i. 27.
I take it, of his goodness, his justice, his fidelity, (John xxi.
constancy, of all those commendable perfections, 20.)
which are expressed in dealing with others; and
the Lord, his passion being instantly to follow, made
a reflection; *Now is the Son of man glorified,* John xiii.
d God is glorified in him; and, *I have glorified*^{31. xvii. 4.}
e upon earth; *I have finished the work which*
u gavest me to do. God did therein shew him-
f most highly good and gracious, in so providing
the welfare of those who deserved nothing of
n, who deserved ill of him, who had offended and
ured him very heinously: he manifested himself
st strictly just, in not suffering iniquity to go un-
nished, but rather than so, exposing his own dear
1 to punishment, and in him choosing himself to
fer; he declared his wisdom in contriving so ad-
rable an expedient, whereby both his goodness

SERM. might be exercised, and his justice not infringed; XXVII. he shewed his veracity, fidelity, and constancy, in executing by his providence what he before had designed and promised, although so grievous and bitter to the Son of his love: he therein also laid a ground of declaring his almighty power, in raising him from the dead, as likewise of his goodness and justice in exalting him: thus by our Saviour's death was the divine glory much illustrated, and our good consequently promoted; for that we therein contemplating him so amiable for goodness, so terrible for justice, so venerable for all excellency, may be induced thence to love him, to dread him, to worship and reverence him, as it becometh us, and as it is necessary for us in order to our happiness.

2. The dignifying and exaltation of our Lord himself; by acquiring unto him in a manner a new right unto, and instating him in an universal dominion, in a transcendent glory, in perfect joy accruing to him by remuneration for so excellent an instance of submission and obedience to God's will. This is

John xiii. 32. xvii. 5. that which our Lord foresaw and foretold; *If God was glorified in him, then will God glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him:* and,

Rom. xiv. 9. *To this end,* saith St. Paul, *Christ died, that he might be the Lord of the dead and living:* and,

Heb. ii. 9. *For the suffering of death he was crowned with glory and honour,* saith the Apostle to the Hebrews:

Phil. ii. 8,9. and, *He was obedient to the death, therefore God exalted him:* and, *The Prince of our salvation was*

Heb. xii. 2. perfected by suffering: and, *For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross;* and, *He,* said

the prophet of him, shall see the travail of his soul, Rev. v. 12, and be satisfied: and, *Worthy,* say the heavenly host 9.

in the Apocalypse, *is the Lamb that is slain, (worthy SERM.
is he, for that he was slain, and did redeem us to XXVII.
God by his blood,) to receive power, and riches, (Tit. ii. 14.)
and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory,
and blessing.*

3. The salvation of mankind; the which he was designed to procure by his death, and in many respects he did promote it thereby.

He did it by appeasing that wrath of God which he naturally beareth toward iniquity, and reconciling God to men, who by sin were alienated from him; by procuring a favourable disposition and intentions of grace toward us. *While we were sinners,* saith Rom. v. 8, St. Paul, *Christ died for us,* (and sinners, or wicked ^{10.} men, God cannot like or endure: *Thou art not,* Psal. v. 4. saith the Psalmist, *a God that hast pleasure in* ^{xi. 5. xxxiv.} _{16.} *wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee; the foolish shall not stand in thy sight; thou hatest all workers of iniquity:* and, *The wicked, and him* ^{Hab. i. 3.} _{Isa. iii. 8.} *that loveth violence, his soul hateth:* yet for us, being such, Christ died, removing thereby that just hatred and displeasure; as St. Paul presently after expresseth and expoundeth it; *When,* saith he, *we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son:*) and otherwhere, *God,* saith he, ^{2 Cor. v. 19.} *was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them;* the non-imputation of our sins is expressed as a singular effect, an instance, an argument of his being in mind reconciled and favourably disposed toward us: and again; *He died to reconcile both* (Jews and Gen- ^{Eph. ii. 16.}
tiles) *unto God in one body by the cross, having* ^{Col. i. 20.} _{21. &c.} *slain the enmity thereby;* that is, God being thereby reconciled to all people, they became thence

SERM. united together in the common relation of friends
XXVII. and fellow-servants to God ; becoming, as it there
 Ephes. ii. follows, *fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the*
^{19.} *Oἰκίας τοῦ Θεοῦ* ^{Θεοῦ.} *household of God,* (or allied unto him by spiritual
 relations.)

Again, It furthered our salvation, by purchasing the remission of our sins, and justification of our persons ; our freedom from condemnation and punishment, our appearance as upright, and acceptable in God's sight ; upon the conditions of faith and repentance propounded in the gospel ; in regard to which effects he is said thereby to redeem us from our sins, to bear them, to take them away, to expiate them, to cleanse, to purge, to sanctify us from them : *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect ? Who shall condemn them ? It is Christ that died ;* that is, Christ's death hath freed them from all liableness to guilt and condemnation.

Rom. viii. 34. Gal. iii. 13. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us ;* that is, he by undergoing an accursed kind of death hath purchased an indemnity and impunity for the transgressors

(1 Pet. ii. 24.) Rom. v. 8. *of God's law : and, Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath ;* that is, from the effects of God's just displeasure, condemnation,

Ephes. i. 7. Ephes. i. 14. *and punishment : and, In whom, saith St. Paul again clearly, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the*

Matt. xxvi. 28. *riches of his grace : and, My blood, saith our Lord, is the blood of the new testament, which was shed*

Heb. ix. 27. Heb. ix. 26. Heb. ix. 28. vii. *for many for the remission of sins : and, Christ, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, was once offered to bear the sin of many, (or of the many, the multitude of men.) Now once in the end of the world .*

hath he appeared, εἰς ἀδέργων ἀμαρτίας, for the abolition of sin by the sacrifice of himself: and, Behold, said St. John the Baptist, *the Lamb of God,* ^{John i. 29.} *that taketh away the sins of the world:* and, *The blood of Christ doth,* saith St. John, *cleanse us from all sin:* *He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood:* *He is a propitiation for our sins;* ^{1 John ii. 2.} *and not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world:* and, *Jesus, that by his blood he might sanctify the people, did suffer out of the gate:* *He delivered himself up for the church, that he might sanctify it—that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

Our Lord also by his death procured our salvation, as having thereby purchased for us means sufficient to free us from the power and dominion of sin, to purify our hearts, and sanctify our lives; for, *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works:* and, *He gave himself for our sins, that he might redeem us from this present evil world:* and, *We were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver, or with gold; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, from our vain conversation, delivered from our fathers:* and, *He by his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness:* *We are with him dead to sin; our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

SERM. In subordination to, coincidence or concurrence
XXVII. with, the principal designs and effects, our Lord also
died for the reparation of God's honour, which we
by contempt of his authority and violation of his law
had impaired, but our Saviour by so signal an obe-
dience thereto did repair ; for the recovery of God's
right, which was infringed by withdrawing so great
and noble a part of his creation from its due alle-
giance and service ; the which he recovered and re-
stored to him ; for the satisfaction to God's justice,
provoked by so heinous impieties and iniquities ; the
which was abundantly performed by so infinitely
valuable a compensation and sacrifice offered there-
to.

Also for ratification of the new covenant between
Heb. x. 29. God and us ; whence his blood is called, *the blood*
Matt. xxvi. 28. *of the covenant, the blood of the new testament.*
1 Cor. xi. 25. For the pacifying and reconciling all things in
Col. i. 20. Eph. ii. 25. heaven and earth ; removing all causes of dissension
heaven and earth ; removing all causes of dissension
and distance ; inducing obligations to concord and
charity.

1 Cor. xv. 55. For pulling out *the sting*, and removing the ter-
Heb. ii. 14. rors of death ; *destroying* (or defeating) *him that*
15. *Karaqy-* had the power of death, and delivering them who
ras. through the fear of death are all their lifetime sub-
ject to death.

Col. ii. 15. For the suppressing, vanquishing, and *triumphing*
John xii. over the powers of hell and darkness, the which he
31. xvi. 11. did, as St. Paul telleth us, achieve upon his cross :
and by his death he telleth us, that the *prince of*
this world was condemned, and cast out.

For engaging us to the practice of all righteousness
and obedience, (especially to the most excellent,
high, and hard parts thereof, charity, humility, meek-

ness, patience, self-denial, utmost constancy and per- SERM.
severance,) both from our obligation in regard to XXVII.
what he suffered for us, and in imitation of his ex-
ample; for, *We should run with patience the race* ^{Heb. xii.}
that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author
and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was
set before him endured the cross, despising the
shame: and, *Christ having suffered for us in the* ^{1 Pet. iv. 1,}
flesh, we should, saith St. Peter, *arm ourselves with*
the same mind,—so as no longer to live the rest of
our time in the flesh to the lust of men, but to the
will of God.

Lastly, for attestation unto and confirmation of divine truth; sealing by his blood that heavenly doctrine which he taught, and *witnessing before* ^{1 Tim. vi.}
Pontius Pilate a good confession: he was the ^{13.}
Prince of martyrs; who, as *he for this end, as he* ^{John xviii.}
told Pilate, was born, and for this end came into ^{37.}
the world, that he might bear witness to the truth,
so he especially did accomplish that glorious design
by his death; *enduring the contradiction of sinners* ^{Heb. xii.}
against himself, resisting unto blood in combating ^{3, 4.}
against sin; by his blood indeed all other witnesses ^{Rev. xii. 11.}
of truth did, as it is said in the Revelation, accom-
plish their warfare, and *obtain victory:* his blood
purchased for them their resolution and strength;
his promises supported them, his example did an-
imate them, to the profession and maintenance of
truth, in the greatest dangers and most violent as-
saults.

Such ends did the death of our Lord regard, such fruits did grow from it, which the time permitteth us but thus cursorily to touch.

5. Now for the practical influences the considera-

SERM. tion of this point should have upon us, they are
XXVII. many and great; but we now can only name or
insinuate them.

1. It should beget in us highest degrees of love and gratitude toward God and toward our Saviour, in regard to this highest expression of love and instance of beneficence toward us. Greater love God could not have shewed, than in thus destinating and offering up his only dearest Son to death (a most John xv.13. painful and shameful death) for our sake; and, *Greater love, he told us himself, than this hath no man, than that one should lay down his life for his friends;* no man hath greater, except himself, who even laid his life down for his enemies and persecutors: and love so incomparably, so extremely great, doth surely require correspondent degrees of love and thankfulness.

2. It should raise in us great faith and hope in God, excluding all distrust and despair, that God will not bestow upon us whatever is needfully or Rom. v. 10. conveniently good for us; for, *He, as St. Paul argueth, who did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

3. Particularly, it should comfort us, and satisfy our conscience in regard to the guilt of our sins, however contracted, supposing that we do heartily repent of them; for that *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;* and, that *being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;* by virtue of his death we sincerely repenting are freed from all condemnation, we truly believing have a firm and sure peace with Rom. viii.
I. v. 1.

God: *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of SERM.*
God's elect? Who is he that condemneth, seeing it XXVII.
is Christ that hath died? We are very blameably ^{Rom. viii.} incredulous, if, having such an assurance from God,³⁴ and such an engagement upon him, we distrust his mercy.

4. It discovereth unto us the heinousness of our sins, and thence should breed in us a vehement detestation, together with a great dread of them; a detestation of them, as having provoked God to such a pitch of displeasure, causing him to deal thus severely with his own beloved Son; as having brought so heavy suffering upon a Person so infinitely high in dignity, excellent in worth, kind and gracious to us; a dread of them, as exposing us, if we do not avoid and forsake them, to the most grievous pains ^{Luke xxiii.} and miseries; for, *if these things were done to a green tree,* (if such punishments were inflicted upon one so innocent, so worthy, so little obnoxious to the fire of divine wrath and vengeance,) *what shall be done to the dry?* that is, what will become of us, who are so guilty, so combustible by that fire, if we by presumptuous commission of sin, and impenitent continuance therein, do incense God against us?

5. It should work in us a kindly contrition and remorse for our sins, which were indeed the murderers of so good a friend and loving a Saviour: others were but instruments; they were the principal authors of his death; they most truly betrayed him, they accused him, they condemned him, they lifted him up to the accursed tree; they moved God, and enabled men to inflict this horrible punishment on him.

6. It should deter us from them, and engage us most carefully to avoid them, as those which in a

SERM. sort do exact another death from him ; *crucifying XXVII. him afresh*, as the Apostle to the Hebrews telleth Heb. vi. 9. us, *viliifying and defiling the precious blood of the x. 29. covenant*, (as he likewise teacheth.)

7. It should engage us to a patient submission and resignation of ourselves to the will and providence of God ; *forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, we should, as St. Peter adviseth, arm ourselves likewise with the same mind* : and, *Let, exhorteth St. Paul, the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus ; who being in the form of God humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross* : we should not disdain, nor upon any account be displeased or unwilling in bearing any cross or affliction, to follow the pattern *Heb. xii. 1. of our great Master ; looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross.*

8. It doth also oblige us to the deepest mortification in conformity to his death : we should be *with Phil. iii. 20. Gal. v. 24. ii. 20. 1 Pet. iv. 2. Col. iii. 3. 5. Rom. vi. 5. 6.* him (or after him) *crucified to the lusts and affections of the flesh, to the fashions, glories, desires, and delights of the world* ; *knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him ; that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

9. It is also a strong engagement to the fullest measure of charity toward our brethren ; for, *If, 1 John iv. 11. iii. 16.* saith St. John, *God so loved us, (as to give his own Son to die for us,) then ought we to love one another*, in a degree answerable to such an obligation and pattern : *If, addeth the same apostle, he laid down his life for us, then ought we also to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

10. In fine, we hence appear obliged to yield up SERM. ourselves wholly to the service of our Saviour ; to XXVII. the promoting of his interest and glory : since *we*, ^{1 Cor. vi.} as St. Paul admonisheth us, *are not our own, being* ^{20. viii. 23.} *bought with a price* ; and must therefore glorify *God in our body, and in our spirit, which are* *God's*, by a purchase so dear and precious ; since, as that apostle again mindeth us, *Christ died for all*, ^{2 Cor. v. 15.} *that they which live might not live to themselves,* *but to him that died for them* ; this being, let us not wrong *the Lord who bought us*, by withholding his ^{2 Pet. ii. 1.} due, the price of his dearest blood ; let us not abuse him, by defeating his purpose, no less advantageous to ourselves, than honourable to him ; but as by being our Saviour he hath deserved to be our Lord, so in effect let him ever be ; let us ever believe him so in our heart, confess him with our mouth, and avow him in our practice ; which that we may do, God of his infinite mercy, by his holy grace, vouchsafe unto us, through *Jesus Christ our Lord.* Amen.

Now, Unto him that loved us, and washed us ^{Rev. i. 5.} *from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us* *kings and priests unto God and his Father : to* *him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.*

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive ^{Rev. v. 12.} *power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and* *honour, and glory, and blessing.*

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be ^{Rev. v. 13.} *unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto* *the Lamb for ever and ever.* Amen.

He descended into Hell.

SERMON XXVIII.

ACTS ii. 27.

Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell.

SERM. ST. PETER in his sermon to the Jews cites these words of the Psalmist to prove the resurrection of Christ. And because upon these words our Saviour's *descent into hell* seems to be grounded, I shall from this text take occasion to discourse of this article of the Creed, *Kατελθόντα εἰς ἀδού*, *He descended into hell.*

This article is of later standing in the Creed, and doth not appear to have had place in any of the most ancient ones public or private; excepting that of Aquileia; into which also perhaps it might have been inserted not long before Ruffinus's time; and the meaning thereof hath always (both in more ancient times among the Fathers, and afterwards among the Schoolmen, and lately among modern divines) been much debated, having yielded occasion to many prolix and elaborate discourses: to recite the several opinions about it, or different explications thereof, with the reasons produced to maintain or disprove them, were a matter of greater time and pains than I can well afford; and to decide the controversies about it, a matter of greater difficulty than

I could hope to achieve. Wherefore (both upon SERM.
these accounts, and because I rather choose to insist XXVIII.
upon matters more clear in their nature, and more
practical in consequence) I should be willing alto-
gether to wave this obscure and perplexed subject ;
yet however somewhat to comply with expectation,
I shall touch briefly upon some things seeming con-
ducible to the clearing, or to the ending of the con-
troversies about it.

Now whereas there may be a threefold inquiry ;
one, concerning the meaning of these words (*he de-
scended into hell*) intended by those who inserted
them ; another, concerning the most proper signifi-
cation of the words themselves ; a third, concerning
the meaning they are in consistency with truth ca-
pable of ;

1. The first I resolve, or rather remove, by saying, it seems needless to dispute, what meaning they, who placed the words here, did intend ; since, 1. It is possible, and by many like instances might be de-
clared so, and perhaps not unlikely, that they might both themselves upon probable grounds believe, and for plausible ends propound to the belief of others, this proposition, without apprehending any distinct sense thereof ; as we believe all the scriptures, and commend them to the faith of others, without under-
standing the sense of many passages therein : and since, 2. Perhaps they might by them intend some notion not certain, or not true, following some conceits then passable among divers, but not built upon any sure foundation, (like that of the millennium ; and the necessity of infants communicating, &c. which were anciently in great vogue, but are now discarded :) and since, 3. To speak roundly, their

SERM. bare authority, whoever they were, (for that doth not appear,) could not be such, as to oblige us to be of their minds, whatever they did mean or intend; they perhaps were such, to whom we might owe much reverence, but should not be obliged to yield entire credence to their opinions. But further, 4. Were I bound to speak my sense, I should say, that, supposing they had any distinct meaning, they did intend to affirm, that our Saviour's soul did, by a true and proper kind of motion, descend into the regions infernal, or beneath the earth; where they conceived the souls of men were detained: for this appears to have been the more general and current opinion of those times, which it is probable they did comply with herein, whencesoever fetched, however grounded.

2. As to the second inquiry, concerning the signification of the words, what may be meant by *he descended*; whether our Saviour himself, according to his humanity, or his soul, or his body, called *he* by synecdoche: what by *descended*, whether (to omit that sense, which makes the whole sentence an allegory, denoting the sufferance of infernal or hellish pains and sorrows, as too wide from the purpose; whether, I say) by *descending* may be signified a proper local motion toward such a term, or an action so called in respect to some such motion accompanying it; or a virtual motion by power and efficacy in places below: what by *hell*, whether a state of being, or a place; if a place, whether that where bodies are reposed, or that to which souls do go; and if a place of souls, whether the place of good and happy souls, or that of bad and miserable ones; or indifferently, and in common of both those; for such a manifold

ambiguity these words have, or are made to have; SERM. and each of these senses are embraced and contend- XXVIII.
ed for: I shall not examine any of them, nor further meddle in the matter, than by saying,

1. That the Hebrew word *sheol* (upon the true notion of which the sense of the word *hell* (or *hades*) in this place is conceived to depend) doth seem originally, most properly, and most frequently (perhaps constantly, except when it is translated, as all words sometimes are, to a figurative use) to design the whole region pretended downward from the surface of the earth to a depth (according to the vulgar opinion, as it seems anciently over the world) indefinite and unconceivable; vastly capacious in exten-
 sion, very darksome, desolate, and dungeon-like in quality, (whence it is also frequently styled the *pit*,
^a the *lowest pit*,^b the *abyss*,^c the *depths of the earth*,<sup>a Isa.
xxxviii. 18.</sup>
^d the *darkness*,^e the *depths of hell*.) I need not la-
 bour much to confirm the truth of this notion, since it is obvious, that this *sheol* (when most absolutely and properly taken, the circumstances of discourse about it implying so much) is commonly opposed to *heaven*, not only in situation, but in dimension and distance; as when Job, speaking of the unsearchableness of the divine perfections, saith, *It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?* and the prophet Amos; *Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb into heaven, thence will I bring them down.*

2. I say further, because the bodies (or visible remainders) of persons dying do naturally fall down, or are put into the bosom of this pit, which is therefore an universal grave and receptacle of them, therefore

SERM. to die is frequently termed καταβαίνειν εἰς ᾍδον, or
 XXVIII. κατάγεσθαι εἰς ᾍδον, to descend, or to be brought down

Ps. lxxxix. into this hell; which happening to all men without
 48. exception, (for, as the Psalmist says, *there is no man*

that shall deliver his soul (or his life, or himself) from the hand of this all-grasping hell,) therefore it is attributed promiscuously to all men, good and bad

Gen. alike; *I will go down*, saith good Jacob, unto the
 xxxvii. 35. grave, unto my son mourning, (καταβήσομαι εἰς ᾍδον,

xliv. 29. 31. I will go down to sheol, this common grave of mankind,) and so frequently of others. Whence this hell is apt figuratively to be put for, and to signify equivalently with, death itself; and it is once by the

LXX. so translated, (and St. Peter seems to use the phrase^f after them;) for death, I say, or for the law,

xxiii. 6. condition, and state of death: as in that of Hezekiah

Acts ii. 24. in the prophet Isaiah^g; *Sheol cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth: where οἱ εἰς ᾍδον, and οἱ ἀποθανότες*, (as the Greek readers sheol

xxxviii. 18. and death,) are the same, and opposed to the living, of whom it is said, *The living, the living he shall praise thee.*

Death and hades are frequently joined as synonymous. (Ecclesi. xlvi. 5.) 3. I say further, that this word, according to ancient use, seems not to signify the place whither men's souls do go, or where they abide; for that,

1. It can hardly be made appear, that the ancient Hebrews either had any name appropriated to the place of souls, or did conceive distinctly which way they did go; otherwise than that, as the Preacher

Eccles. xii. speaks, *they returned unto God who gave them*;

7. and that they did abide in God's hand; especially the souls of the just, according to that in the book

Wisd. iii. 1. (Deut. xxxiii. 3.) of Wisdom; *The souls of the righteous are in the*

hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. And for that,

SERM.
XXVIII.

2. It seems, they did rather conceive the souls of men, when they died, to go upward than downward; as the Preacher again intimates, when he differenceth the spirit of man dying from the soul of beasts; *the soul of beasts descending with its body* Eccles. iii. *to the earth; the spirit of man ascending unto God*,^{21.} to be disposed by him according to his pleasure and justice. And by Enoch's *being taken to God*, Gen. v. 24. (whose special residence is expressed to be in heaven above,) and by Elias's translation *up into heaven*,^{22.} 2 Kings ii. (as it is in the text of the history,) it is probable,^{23.} they did rather suppose the souls of the righteous to ascend, than to be conveyed downward into subterraneous caverns, those *μυκοὶ ἀδον*, *closets of hell*, as Wisd. xvii. the book of Wisdom calls them; that *βόθρος ἀδον*, *deep pit of hell*, as it is in Ben-Sirach; to ascend, I say, ^{24.} whether into the supreme heaven, or no, is not material; but somewhither above, nearer unto God's most special residence, into a happy place.

Oig. iii. 10, 11.
Chrys. ad Heb. ix. 8.
Eph. iii. 15.
Heb. xi. 16.
xii. 22.

3. I add, that if those ancients had by *sheol* meant Isa. xxxviii. the receptacle or mansion of souls, it is not likely^{18.} they would have used such expressions as those: *The grave (sheol) cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth*; so Hezekiah spake: *In Psal. vi. 5. death there is no remembrance of thee; in sheol who shall give thee thanks?* so David said: and, *There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in sheol, whither thou goest*; so the Preacher; who hardly it seems could say so, if by *sheol* he meant the place of souls; except he should also mean, that souls after death became deprived of

SER M. all life and sense. The son of Sirach likewise speaks XXVIII. in the same manner : ἵψαστο τις αἰνέσαι εἰς ᾅδον ; Who Eccl. xviii. 27, 28. shall praise the Most High in hell, instead of them which live and give thanks? Thanksgiving perisheth from the dead, as from one that is not : the living and sound in heart shall praise the Lord.

I must confess, that afterwards (even before our Saviour's time) the word ᾅδης was assumed by the Jews to design (as it did among the Greeks) either the place of souls in common, or more strictly the place of souls condemned to punishment and pain, for their bad lives here : Josephus doth often use the word in the first of these senses ; and in the New Testament it seems peculiarly applied to the latter ; as in the parable of the rich man, who being Luke xvi. 23. ἐν τῷ ᾅδῃ, in hell and torments, did thence lift up his eyes, and behold afar off Lazarus in Abraham's bosom : but we cannot hence infer the same concerning the ancient meaning of the word *sheol* ; especially considering how the Jews, after the prophetic days, in their dispersions becoming acquainted with the world, did borrow some notions and expressions from elsewhere ; which expressions our Saviour and his apostles might well retain, when they were suitable and accommodable unto truth.

3. But however it be determined concerning the proper sense in general of this principal word in the proposition, and of the rest depending thereon, as to their signification here ; I do thus, as to the present case, and the last main question propounded about the meaning, whereof the words are capable with truth, answer briefly.

1. If we do interpret the *descent into hell* here affirmed of our Saviour's interment, or being laid in

the bosom of that universal grave we before spake SERM.
of; or if (in a notion little differing from that) we XXVIII.
take these words for a phrase (taking its ground
thence in the manner forementioned) importing no
otherwise than when it was spoken of Jacob and
others, that our Saviour did really pass into the
state of death; we are sure therein not to err; the
proposition so understood being most certainly true:
we shall also hereby be able fairly to satisfy the first
and best (if not the only) reason of this proposition
being commended to our belief. For that place in
the Acts which seems to have been the occasion and
the main ground of this proposition being asserted
in these terms, doth not refuse, but commodiously
admits this interpretation: for our Saviour's *soul* ^{Acts ii. 31.}
not being left in hell, and not seeing corruption, ^{xiii. 34.}
is plainly by St. Peter himself interpreted of his re-
surrection; *David, saith he, foreseeing this, spake*
of Christ's resurrection: and, in like manner, by
St. Paul, *As concerning that he raised him from*
the dead, now no more to see corruption, he said in
this wise—that speech, I say, *Our Saviour's soul*
not being left in hell, and, not seeing corruption, is
by the apostles interpreted to denote our Saviour's
resurrection; that is, his being freed from the bands
of death, and raised from the grave, before his flesh
had underwent corruption; and it is opposed unto
David's continuing in death and seeing corruption;
his body being corrupted and consumed in the grave;
the apostles not designing to assert or prove more,
than our Lord's resurrection: David, argue they,
fell on sleep, and hath continued till now in that
state; David remained unto this day in the grave,
and so his body being reduced to dust saw corrup-

SER M. tion ; ἐτελεύτησε καὶ ἐτάφη, *he died and was buried,*
 XXVIII. without any reversion : therefore that speech of his

Acts ii. 29. in the Psalm must not fully and ultimately be understood of him, to whom they did not so exactly agree ; but of such an one, who did not abide in that deadly sleep, whose flesh, being opportunely raised, did avoid the sight (or undergoing) of corruption. And whereas it is said, τὴν ψυχήν μου, *my soul*, or *my life* ; nothing can be thence drawn greatly prejudicial to this exposition ; for (to omit that bolder exposition of Beza, who sometime did by the soul understand the dead body, translating the words, *Non derelinques cadaver meum in sepulchro*) nothing is more usual than both for the flesh and for the soul (each of them synecdochically) to signify the person, considered as sometime endued

Exod. xxxi. with life ; *Every one that sinneth shall be put to death*,^{14.} Levit. vii. and, *That soul shall be cut off*,^{15.} are terms
 25, 27. v.
 2, &c. equivalent in the law ; *The soul that eateth*, *The soul that toucheth*, and the like phrases do often

Psal. xxxiii. occur ; and those expressions, *To deliver their soul from death* ;^{19.} *God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave* ; *What man is he that shall not see death, that shall deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?*^{48.} do seem parallel to this, *Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell* ; which yet do import no more, than the persons there spoken of respectively to be preserved from death.

Again, taking *soul* for the *living soul*, or that faculty by which we live, and *hell* for the state of death, the words mentioned, *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*, will have this natural exposition, agreeable to the apostle's design ; *Thou wilt not suffer me to continue deprived of life, till my flesh*

be corrupted. It is also observable, that St. Paul, SERM. in the 13th of the Acts, neglecting the former part, XXVIII. *Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell,* contents himself with the latter, *Thou wilt not yield thy Holy One to see corruption;* intimating both parts to signify the same thing.

If it be objected as an inconvenience to this explication of the words here in the Creed, that, admitting it, they signify no more than what was before expressed in plain words, *dead and buried;* and so contain only a needless repetition; I answer,

1. That this objection concerns them who inserted the words here; who yet, even supposing this exposition to be good, might be excusable, as suspecting it possible that our Saviour's being ἐν ᾍծον, according to St. Peter, might imply more than this, although they knew not what distinctly; who also might perhaps intend somewhat by these words different from this sense, but not so truly applicable to them, or agreeable to the truth of the thing; I answer,

2. That to say our Saviour did continue in the state of death for some time, doth add somewhat above his being dead and buried; wherefore thus understanding the *descent* doth not render it altogether superfluous.

3. That a greater inconvenience seems to arise from expounding them otherwise; the doing so reflecting upon the more ancient compilers both of this and other breviaries of faith, as the Nicene and Constantinopolitan councils, Irenæus, Tertullian, &c. who left them out; which they should not have done, if they contain any thing highly material, and different from what is here otherwise expressed, whose credit is (as I conceive) more to be tendered,

SERM. than of their juniors and followers unknown to us;
XXVIII. and so much the more, for that in a matter of this

kind, defect or omission is less tolerable, than any redundancy in expression. Which inconvenience may seem in a manner to reach higher, even to St. Paul himself; who in the fifteenth chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians, declaring the sum of what he both learned and taught concerning our Saviour's last grand performances, only mentions

^{1 Cor. xv.} his death, burial, and resurrection ; *I delivered unto you first, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day;* which enumeration of his, we may, it seems, well acquiesce in, as sufficient and complete, and may thence with great probability infer, that no other *descent* of our Saviour *into hell*, beside his death and burial, was by him understood, or delivered in his catechetical discourses and preachings as a point of faith ; so that what is objected as an inconvenience, proves no small advantage to this exposition. But I say further, to the main question, that,

2. Interpreting *hell* for the mansion, or habitation of souls departed hence, (to omit, that *sheol*, as I before noted, seems to signify otherwise in the Old Testament, and consequently thence the place in

*Eἰς ἡ τάρεις
ἀπότας κα-
θάρις εἰς δε-
κτῖον ἀνθρώ-
πων ψυχὰς
μετανίστη-
σαι. Greg.
Nyss. de Im.
an.
Μιτράβαρις
εἰς τὸ ἄνθρο-
καὶ ἀφανίει.*
Id.

the Acts applied out of the Psalms would not be proper to this purpose; whereby the main ground and support of the assertion itself, taken according to this sense, were removed ; waving, I say, that consideration, and taking *ἄδης*, according to the meaning which we must confess it sometime to bear in the New Testament, yet,) there seems to follow some inconvenience thereon. For then we must

either take it for the place of damned spirits, shut up in torment or despair, according to which conception the proposition itself would be most certainly uncertain, having no solid ground for it; and most probably false, for that it is affirmed, our Saviour's soul, the same day he died, did go into paradise; *This day*, said he to the penitent thief, *shalt thou be with me in paradise,*) or we must take it for a place common to all souls, as well good and blessed, as bad and miserable; (for that it in the New Testament at least comprehends the place of torment, is evident by the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.) But I think that St. Austin had reason to doubt, whether it were consonant to the style of the New Testament, that *hades*, relating to the state of souls, should there be ever taken in a good or middle sense, at least, whereas it is said in the Revelation, that those two inseparable companions, *death* and *hades*, (that *hades*, which is said to render up its dead to judgment,) were cast into the lake of fire, it is hard to suppose that *paradise* was cast in there; yea hard it were to say, that *hades* was cast in thither, supposing that word did then in its usual latitude of signification (as Christians understood it) comprehend *paradise*. Yea further, this explication forces us upon this inconvenience, that we must suppose paradise to be seated in a place beneath us, or within the earth; that paradise, which is either the same with the third (or highest) heavens in St. Paul, or confining thereto; it is, I say, hard to be forced by an interpretation of these words, to consent, that paradise (that *locus divinæ amoenitatis recipiendis sanctorum spiritibus destinatus*; the place of divine comfort and amenity, destined to

² Cor. xii.
Οὐρὶ γέγε
ὑποχθόνιος
ίσται τις ἡδύ-
τος παραδί-
σος, οὐρὶ οὐ-
ταραδίση-
τος οὐρα-
χθό-
νη, &c.
Greg. Nysa.
tom. 2. de Resur. 1. Tertull. Apol. 47.

SERM. receive the spirits of the saints) should have its
XXVIII. place in the darksome bowels of the earth; no com-
modious situation, it seems, for a garden, for delight-
some walks and bowers: yet so it must be seated,
that our Saviour's soul may (at least in rigour and
propriety of speech) be said to descend thereinto.
The word *descend*, taking *hell* for the ancient *sheol*,
is proper enough, and hath ground both in authentic
use and the nature of the thing; but taking *hell* in
this sense, (for the place of souls,) it is most prob-
ably improper, and hath no certain ground or au-
thority to commend it; for it is said, that our Sa-
viour's soul was in hell, not that it descended thither;
nor can it by consequence be inferred so to
have done, according to this meaning of *hell*. How-
ever,

3. I add, that seeing it is a most certain truth,
that our Saviour's soul did immediately go into the
place appointed to receive happy souls after their
recession from the body, and resignation into God's
hands; if we take *hell* in a general and common
sense for the place, or the state of souls departed; and
descending for passing thereinto, (by a falling, as it
were, from life, or by going away together with the
descent of the body; and thence styled descending;
what appeareth visibly happening to the body being
accommodated to the soul;) if, I say, we do thus
interpret our Saviour's *descent into hell*, for his
soul's going into the common receptacle and man-
sion of souls, we shall so doing be sure not substan-
tially to mistake. And this sense, I conceive, if the
words can handsomely bear it, would be very pro-
per to this place, as signifying somewhat distinct
from what is otherwise expressed, and serving to

the further establishment of those great articles ad- SERM.
joining, our Lord's *death* and *resurrection*; it im- XXVIII.
plying the perfect accomplishment of death, for the
soul to have deserted the body, and to have been
translated into that ἀδύνατον ἄδην, (as the book of
Wisdom calls it,) that *invisible region*, so far distant Wisd. xvii.
hence, whence—*revocare gradum superasque eva-*
dere ad auras, is a labour indeed, and a work not
to be effected, but by the power of him whose pre-
rogative it is, *to kill, and make alive; to bring*^{1 Sam. ii. 6.}
down to hell, and to bring up; to lead unto the^{Deut. xxxii. 39.}
gates of hell, and to bring back again.^{Tob. xiii. 2.}^{14.}
Wisd. xvi.

This is all that I shall say about this intricate point;^{13.} for I cannot well be at the pain to consider or examine those conceits, which pretend to acquaint us why and to what effect our Saviour descended into hell.

That our Lord went thither to preach unto, convert, and redeem from thence all, or some of the damned souls; (for some say, that he depopulated Iren. iv. 45.
and emptied that region of darkness; others are not v. 31.
so liberal as to free all thence, but only the fitter Euseb. Hist.
objects of compassion and favour; both saying that i. ult.
which hath very weak or no reasons to maintain, Clem. Str.
very strong and plain objections to assail it.) ii. p. 163.
v. p. 271.
Euseb. De-
monst. x. 8.
Athan.
Cont. Apol.
lin.

That he went to rescue and conduct into glory the souls of the patriarchs, and other good persons, from that infernal *limbus*, in which till then they were detained, (a place by no likely means to be proved existent elsewhere than in the fancy of its inventors;) or, that he went to deliver the souls of the just, and prophets, from the wicked powers, into whose power they had fallen, (as Justin Martyr in his Dialogue with Tryphon, p. 105.)

SER.M. That he went to affront, triumph over, and ter-
XXVIII. rify the powers of darkness upon their own ground,
 Vid. Mon- or in their own dominions.

Vid. Mon-
tac. Orig.
Part. Post.
p. 442. et in
Appar. I. These and the like conceits seem enough dis-
 countenanced by saying, the scriptures nowhere
 plainly declare any such thing, and that therefore
 they have no good ground to stand upon, (they pre-
 tend only one or two difficult and obscure places in
 the First Epistle of St. Peter, which are capable of
 fair expositions not favourable to them;) whereas
 in teaching us, that our Lord preached upon earth
 salvation to them, who in this life should be con-
 verted to believe upon him and obey his laws; dam-
 nation irrecoverable to them, who should persist in
 infidelity and disobedience: that he merited by his

Heb. ii. 14. Coloss. ii. 15. obedience, and purchased by his blood, both a re-
 demption from all future distress and a translation
 into bliss; that he by his death vanquished all the

powers of hell, and triumphed over them upon the
 cross; in these things the scripture is very clear and
 copious: but concerning that redemption of souls
 beneath, that translation of souls out of subterra-

* Bellarm. neous closets, or * prisons, (as they call them,) that
 local triumph in the Devil's kingdom, it is quite
 silent, or very dark in expression about them;
 whence we may well be somewhat backward in
 yielding assent to such devices, of which, if any
 perhaps should be true, yet could not the belief
 thereof be of necessity, or great importance to us:
 for what our Saviour so did below would not belong
 to the salvation of the living, which is abundantly
 provided for by his death and resurrection, with
 what followed them, nor would it much refer to
 our practice, which is otherwise sufficiently directed

and encouraged. So that we may however safely SERM.
be ignorant in regard to any of those notions. But XXVIII.
let it suffice to have discoursed thus far about Vid. Fidei
this endless question; except we will end it with Symbola in
that saying of St. Austin; *Melius est dubitare de Codice Jus-*
occultis, quam litigare de incertis: or with that *tinian. Tit.*
more peremptory saying of Calvin; *Atqui stultum i. De Gen.*
et temerarium est de rebus incognitis altius inqui-
rere, quam Deus nobis scire permittit. *ad Tit. viii.*
5. *Calv. Inst.*
iii. 25, 6.

He rose again from the Dead.

S E R M O N XXIX.

Acts i. 3.

To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

SERM. XXIX. **T**HE most proper and most usual way of God, in confirming any truth of high moment in special manner revealed by him, is by lending unto them whom he employs as messengers thereof his powerful arm, for the performance of works supernatural or miraculous. Of such works there is none more certainly such, than raising a dead person to life ; the doing which upon several accounts plainly surpasseth the power of any creature ; not only as exceeding the ordinary law and course of nature established and upheld by God, but for that the souls of men departing hence do return into God's hand, or into a state by high sentence determined, whence no creature is able to fetch them down, or raise them up ; because also God hath reserved the pre-

Rev. i. 18. Deut. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 6. Psal. lxviii. 20.rogative of doing this unto himself ; he *holding* (as it is expressed in the Revelation) *the keys of hell and of death* ; he having said, *I am he, and there is no God beside me ; I kill, and I make alive.*

There could also particularly be no more proper way of confirming our religion to come from God,

whether we consider the persons whom it was designed for, or the doctrines it propounded. The Jews were incapable of conviction by any other way than by miracle ; no other reason would have been apprehended by them, or would have had any force upon them : *The Jews*, saith St. Paul, *require a sign* ; and, *Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe*, said our Saviour to them. The Gentiles also had been so used to the winding off and on the subtleties and the plausibilities of disputation, that nothing probably in that kind would have sufficed to persuade them ; and therefore somewhat miraculous in the highest kind might be needful to convert them : also the most peculiar and eminent doctrines of our religion (such as are, *Our Lord Jesus being the Messias, the Son of God, and Saviour of the world*; the *future resurrection, general judgment*, and dispensation of rewards, answerable to men's practice in this life) cannot more immediately and directly be assured, than by the resurrection from the dead of him who principally did reveal them.

Wherefore Almighty God in confirmation of our religion did perform this great work in raising Jesus our Lord from the dead ; and withal (for the conviction of the world, for rendering our faith reasonable and our infidelity inexcusable) he did take especial care, that the fact should by very sufficient testimony be conveyed unto us ; to which purpose he did, as St. Peter saith, *προχειροτοεῖν*, predesign, pick out, and appoint a competent number of persons, in all respects capable and fit to assert it : thus is that which St. Luke in our text doth in way of historical narration affirm. And because the truth thereof is

SERM.
XXIX.2 Cor. i. 22.
John iv. 48.

Acts x. 41.

SERM. in its kind the principal argument, whereby the truth
XXIX. of our religion in gross may be evinced, we shall for
the confirmation of our faith against all impressions
of this incredulous (and therefore impious) age, en-
deavour by God's assistance now to declare and main-
tain it. That Jesus truly died, all the world could
testify ; no death was ever more solemn or remark-
able ; nor do any adversaries contest it ; that he
after that death was by divine power raised again
to life is that which we believe and assert. Now
whoever with reason shall doubt thereof or deny it,
must do it, either because of some repugnance in
the fact itself, implying that it could not well be
done ; or from deficiency of the testimony proving
it, as to its authors or circumstances : but neither
of these exceptions may reasonably be admitted.

As for the fact itself, or the notion of a resurrec-
tion in general, there cannot, (admitting that, which,
as capable of antecedaneous proof, and as acknow-
ledged by all persons owning any religion, may be
presupposed, the power and providence of God, to-
gether with his chief attributes of wisdom and good-
ness incomprehensible,) there cannot be any repug-
nance therein, or any incredibility. For it was nei-
ther in its nature impossible to God, or in its design
unworthy of him ; it contained nothing apparently
either beyond the power of God, or presumable to
be against his will.

1. To raise a dead man to life, is indeed, we con-
fess and avow, a work surpassing the power of any
creature not assisted by God ; but no reason can be
assigned, why it should go beyond the divine power.
The doing it doth not involve contradiction, and is
therefore an object of power, and at least is achiev-

able by Omnipotence : let the soul be what it will, SERM. and in whatever life may be supposed to consist, XXIX. nothing can hinder that God may reduce the parts of a man into the same state they sometime before were in. And very easily it is conceivable, that he who (according to the general notions and current traditions of mankind) did first inspire the soul of man into his body, may reinfuse it being separated ; that he who after death keepeth it in his hand, may thence restore it ; who also (according to histories received in all the principal religions that have been in the world) hath often actually performed it. Pliny indeed doth reckon this among instances of things absolutely impossible ; **It is, saith he, a great solace of our imperfect nature, that even God cannot do all things ; for neither can he bring death upon himself, if he would, nor bestow eternity on mortals, nor recall the dead to life :* but it is no wonder, that he, who thought the soul quite to perish by death, should conceive the restitution thereof impossible ; although even supposing that, his opinion was not reasonable ; for even any thing, how corruptible soever by dissolution of its ingredients, or alteration of its temperament, may, by recollecting and rejoining those ingredients, or by reestablishing the causes of such a temperament, be restored, (as a house whose materials are dispersed may be redified, or as a liquor by a new fermentation may be revived;) which to effect may not be deemed hard to him that made the whole world : however to such

* Imperfectæ vero in homine naturæ præcipua solatia sunt, ne Denm quidem posse omnia ; nam neque sibi potest mortem consciscere si velit, (quod homini dedit optimum in tantis vitæ malis) nec mortales æternitate donare, nec revocare defunctos. *Plin. ii. 7.*

SERM. as him we may say, as our Saviour did to the Sadducees, *Ye err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.* Especially to those who acknowledge the immortality of the soul, or its permanence in a separate state, and who admit the truth of the ancient histories among the Jews, it is not only most evidently possible, but very credible, that God upon any considerable occasion should perform it : with such St. Paul might well thus expostulate ; *What? doth it seem incredible to you, that God should raise the dead?* to you that have such previous notions and persuasions about God's omnipotency ; (such as the prophet Jeremiah expresseth when he saith, *Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched-out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:*) to you who avow God to be the *Father of spirits, who formeth the spirit of man within him,* and that when man dieth, *his spirit returneth to God who gave it:* to you who believe that our souls are spiritual substances, like unto angels, subsisting after death, and destined to future rewards : to you, in fine, who may in your holy records find so many experiments of this power exerted by God in his prophets ; such as that of Elias's restoring the widow of Sarepta's son ; of Elisha raising the son of the Shunamite ; that of the dead man reviving when his body touched the prophet's bones : to you therefore this fact cannot be in itself incredible ; nor indeed can it, for the reason suggested, to any man reasonably seem impossible.

2. Nor was it apparently in its design unworthy of God, or inconsistent with his holy will : for the ends thereof (such as were pretended by the at-

testers of it) were, as very great and important, so SERM.
most good and reasonable ; it aimed at no slight or XXIX.
trifling matter, but such as in appearance highly
concerned the glory of God, and conduced to the
welfare of mankind ; it professing itself to be a
credential of the greatest embassy that ever came
down from heaven to men, importing the complete
revelation of God's will and procurement of salvation
to the world ; and did therefore in that respect well
become the wisdom and goodness of God to use it.
It pretended to confirm a doctrine containing most
true and worthy representations of God, the best
that could be ; declaring most gracious intentions in
God of mercy and kindness toward men ; no less
proper for him than grateful and needful for us ;
prescribing most excellent rules and patterns of life,
(wherein the most genuine piety and virtue, most
exact justice and hearty charity, most strict purity
and sobriety are prescribed,) yielding the most effec-
tual helps to the practice of all goodness, and ten-
dering the best encouragement thereto ; and upon
this account therefore also most worthy of God. So
that indeed God could not be conceived to perform
such a miracle to better purpose, than for promoting
the designs it pretendeth, being so very great, and
so very good : it could not be improper for the Di-
vine power to be thus exerted in favour of a religion
so apt to promote his glory, and to procure our be-
nefit.

If it be said, that it is absurd or improbable that
God should choose to perform this miracle upon a
person of this sort ; one so mean and obscure in the
state of his life, so wretched and infamous for the
manner of his death ; that God rather should have

SER.M. chosen for the interpreter of his mind, and minister
XXIX. of his purposes, a personage more illustrious in rank,
 and clear in repute ; I answer, first, that our shallow
 fancy is a bad and incompetent judge of what is
 reasonable or absurd, convenient or unfit, in such

^{1 Sam. xvi.} cases, touching the counsels of God ; *who seeth not*
^{7.} *as man seeth* ; *whose thoughts are not as our*
^{Isa. lv. 8.} *thoughts, nor ways as our ways* ; whose folly is
^{xl. 13.} *wiser than men*, (that is, whose counsels, however
^{2 Cor. i. 25.} seeming strange to our dim apprehensions, do yet
 far excel the results of our best wisdom ;) before

^{Luke xvi.} whom, *whatever is high among men is abominable* ;
^{15.}
^{1 Cor. v. 13.} *with whom the wisdom of this world is folly* ; whose
^{Rom. xi.} *judgments are unsearchable, and his ways are past*
^{33.} *(Ps. xcii. 5.) finding out* ; as the holy scriptures teach us ; and as
^(Ps. xxvi. 7.) good reason, considering the vast distance between
 God and us, must acknowledge : so that no such ap-
 pearance of incongruity can bottom a good exception
 against this, or any such matter, otherwise well at-
 tested. I say further, that God's choice herein, be-
 ing weighed by a pure and well disposed mind, will
 appear upon many accounts full of admirable reason
 and wisdom ; all the divine economy concerning our
 Lord, being rightly apprehended, will soon appear
^{1 Cor. ii. 6.} *wisdom to the perfect*, and will *be justified by the*
^{7, 14.}
^{Mat. xi. 19.} *children of wisdom* ; as that wherein God's trans-
 cendent goodness, and perfect justice, and glorious
 power are with greatest advantage displayed ;
 whereby the hearts of men are most sweetly com-
 forted under their sense of sin and fear of misery,
 their minds are most clearly instructed in the ways
 of duty and happiness, their affections are most
 strongly excited and encouraged to the practice of
 all goodness : to such purposes (for causes which,

were it now seasonable, we could produce) our Sa- SERM.
viour's low condition and hard circumstances did XXIX.
admirably serve; and therefore upon that score it
could not be unlikely that God should raise him
from the dead.

3. But neither (which is the most considerable point) is the testimony asserting this fact anywise defective or insufficient, but hath all the conditions imaginably requisite to the most entire assurance of any such matter. The defect in the testimony, if any be, must arise from weakness or from wilfulness in the witnesses, (their want of knowledge or mistake, their want of honesty or their unfaithfulness,) or from some circumstances belonging to their persons, or their testimony, able to invalidate their attestation; but none of these things can with reason be supposed; they were in all respects more than competently qualified to attest, and all considerable circumstances do assist in confirming their attestation; as by weighing the considerations following may appear.

1. As for their number, it was not one or two persons, (although one or two ordinarily do suffice for decision of the greatest cases among men,) but many who conspired in asserting it. *He was* (saith St. ^{Cor. xv.} Paul, one who was conversant with these witnesses,^{5, 6.} who, of a zealous adversary and fierce persecutor of this testimony, did become an earnest avoucher thereof) *seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present.* And, *This Jesus,* say the twelve apostles, ^{Acts ii. 14,} *hath God raised up, whereof all we are witnesses:* ^{32. v. 32.} ^{i. 22. x. 39.} *twelve there were who principally were designed,*

SERM. and did take it for their especial duty to attest this
XXIX. matter, beside many others, who in their order were
able and ready to do it.

2. These witnesses were no strangers to Jesus,
but persons by long conversation most familiarly
John xv. 27. acquainted with him; *who had* (as it is said, and
Acts i. 21, 22. as it was notorious) *been with him from the begin-*
ning, who went out and in with him all the time (that is, for three years' space) *from his baptism to*
his ascension.

Luke i. 2. 3. They did aver themselves to be *αὐτότεροι τῶν*
λόγου, or αὐτηκοόντες, eye or ear-witnesses of the mat-
ter, as fully informed about it as senses could make
Acts iv. 20. them; *We cannot but speak what we have heard*
1 John i. 1. *and seen: What we did see with our eyes, and*
what our hands did handle of the word of life, that we report unto you; so St. John (the beloved
2 Pet. i. 16. ter) expresseth his testimony: and, *We have not*
followed cunningly devised fables, when we made
known unto you the power and presence of our
Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his
majesty; so St. Peter affirmeth concerning the man-
ner of their testifying these matters. They did, I
say, hear and see him, and that with all advantage
possible or needful, not once or twice, not in passing,
or at distance, not in way of glimpse or rumour; but
often, for a good time, thoroughly; many days con-
Acts x. 41. versing and interchanging discourses with him; *who,*
as St. Peter in the name of the rest saith, *did eat*
and drink with him after that he rose from the
Acts i. 3. *dead:* and, *To whom*, as St. Luke, their companion,
from their mouth in our text saith, *also he shewed*
himself alive after his passion by many infallible

proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking SERM.
of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God : XXIX.
and, *He was*, saith St. Paul, another familiar of Acts xiii.
theirs, seen many days of them which came up with^{31.}
him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his wit-
nesses to the people. And two of these witnesses,
St. John and St. Matthew, are in writings extant re-
laters of passages occurring in their conversation
with him, very many, very sensible as can be.

4. We may also consider, that the chief of these
witnesses, the apostles themselves, were at first (as
St. Luke of them and from them confesseth) so far
from being easy or credulous in regard to this mat-
ter, that, hearing it from others, who before had seen
our Lord risen, they took it for a trifle, or a fiction,
and gave no credence thereto : *their words*, saith Luke xxiv.
the text, ἐφάγοσαν ὡσεὶ λῆπτος, did seem to them (a toy, Matth.
or) an idle tale, and they believed them not. Yea,^{xxviii. 17.}
some of them would hardly confide in their own eyes,
nor would yield assent unto the fact appearing to
them, until, by letting them touch him, and shewing
them the marks of his crucifixion remaining on his
body, he demonstrated himself to be the very same
person who had lived with them and died before
them ; *They were terrified and affrighted, and* Luke xxiv.
supposed they had seen a spirit—and while they^{37, 41.}
yet believed not for joy, and wondered, &c. are^{John xx.}
words in the history.

5. Upon these grounds, as they professed, they
did, without any mincing, hesitancy, or reservation,
in the most full, clear, downright, and peremptory
manner, with firm confidence and alacrity, concur-
rently aver the fact ; *They spake the word of God* Acts iv. 31.
with boldness—and with great power gave the^{33. xiv. 3.}

SERM. *apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.*
 XXIX.

Which things being weighed, it will appear impossible that the attesters of this fact (supposing them in their wits and senses; and certainly they were so, as presently we shall shew, and as the thing itself plainly speaks) could not be ignorant therein, or mistaken about it. For if all the senses of so many persons in a matter so grossly sensible, so often, and for such a continuance of time, can be distrusted; if the apostles could imagine they saw their Friend and Master, whom they so long had waited upon, when they did not see him; that they heard him making long discourses with them, when they did not hear him; that they did walk, eat, and drink with him, did touch and feel him, when there was really no such thing; what assurance can we have of any thing most sensible? what testimony can be of any validity or use? On that hand, therefore, the testimony is impregnable, the witnesses cannot be accounted ignorant or mistaken in the case; for number, or for ability, they cannot be excepted against.

It must be therefore only their seriousness, honesty, or fidelity, that remains questionable in them; they must be said to have wilfully deceived and imposed upon the world; self-condemned hypocrites, impudent liars, and egregious impostors they must have been, if their testimony was false: but that they were not such persons, that they could not, and would not do so, there are inducements to believe, as forcible as can be required, or well imagined, in any such case.

1. They were persons who did (with denumcia-

tion of most heavy judgments from God on the con- SERM.
trary practices) preach and press constantly and XXIX.
earnestly all kinds of goodness, veracity, and sin-
cerity, together with humility, modesty, ingenuity,
and equity, as main points of that religion, which
they by this testimony confirmed. All their dis-
courses plainly breathed a most serious and sprightly
goodness and charity toward men, very inconsistent
with a base plot to delude them; their doctrine ut-
terly condemned all malice, all falsehood, craft, and
hypocrisy, detruding into the bottomless pit all *that* Rev. xxii.
love or make a lie. Consider these sayings and rules ^{15.} Rev. xxi. 27.
of theirs: *As we have opportunity, let us do good* Gal. vi. 10.
unto all men: Let your moderation (or equity) *be* Phil. iv. 5.
known to all men: Shew all meekness to all men: Tit. iii. 2.
Laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypo- ¹ Pet. ii. 1.
crisies, and envies, and evil speakings, as new-born
babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye
may grow thereby: Putting aside all lying, speak Eph. iv. 25.
every man truth with his neighbour: Lie not one ^{15.} Col. iii. 9.
to another, seeing ye have put off the old man
with his deeds: Brethren, be not children in un- ^{20.} Cor. xiv.
derstanding: however in malice be ye children, Tit. ii. 7, 8.
but in understanding be perfect men. Such were
their precepts, discountenancing all malice and all
fraud; propounded in a manner as serious and grave
and simple as can be imagined; all the tenor of their
doctrine consenting to them: wherein also they
earnestly declare against and prohibit all vanity of
mind and perverseness of humour; all affectations
of novelty and singularity; all peevish factiousness
and turbulency; all fond credulity, stupidity, and
precipitancy; all instability and giddiness of mind;

SERM. all such qualities, which dispose men without most
 XXIX. sure and evident grounds either to introduce or to
 embrace any new conceits, practices, or stories: such
 was their discourse, nowise sounding like the lan-
 guage of impostors; deceit could hardly so disguise
 or so thwart and supplant itself.

2. Their practice was answerable to their doctrine,
 exemplary in all sorts of virtue, goodness, and sin-
 cerity; such indeed whereby they did in effect con-
 ciliate much respect and authority to their words:

¹ Thess. ii. ^{10.} *Ye are witnesses,* (they could, appealing to the ob-
 servers of their demeanour, and to the all-knowing
 God, say,) *and God also, how holily, and justly,*
and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you

² Cor. iv. ^{2.} *We have renounced the hidden*

^{2.} Gal. ii. ^{17.} *things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor*

^{Phil. iii. 17.} *handling the word of God deceitfully; but by ma-*
nifestation of the truth commanding ourselves to
every man's conscience in the sight of God. Such
 a lively sense of goodness shining forth in a long
 course of practice; so to bridle appetites, so to mo-
 derate passions, so to eschew all the allurements of
 pleasure, profit, and honour; to bear adversities so
 calmly and sweetly; to express so much tender
 kindness and meekness toward all men; to be conti-
 nually employed in heavenly discourses and pious
 works; exhorting men by word, leading them by
 example, to all sorts of goodness indisputably such:
 to live thus, long and constantly, doth nowise suit
 unto persons utterly debauched in mind, and of a
 profligate conscience; who had devised, and did
 then earnestly drive on the propagation of a vile
 cheat. The life, I say, they led was not the life of

vicked impostors, but worthy of the divinest men ; SERM. it to countenance and carry on the best design, such XXIX. s they pretended theirs to be.

3. Further, they were persons of good sense ; yea, very wise and prudent ; not in way of worldly or leshly wisdom ; in skill to contrive or compass pro- ^{1Cor. i. 10.} ects of gain, honour, or pleasure to themselves ; to ^{ii. 5, 6.} ^{2Cor. i. 12.} he commendation of them and of their testimony, ^{xi. 6.} they disclaimed being wise or skilful that way ; having no practice therein, nor caring for it ; (for *key looked not much on things temporal and trans-* ^{2 Cor. iv. 18.} *tory* ; they did *not mind earthly things* ; they had ^{Col. iii. 2.} *not their conversation*, or interest, here, but *above*, ^{Phil. iii. 20.} ^{1 Pet. ii. 11.} *is citizens* of another world, deeming themselves as *ut sojourners and pilgrims here* ;) but endued ^{2Cor. xi. 6.} ^{1Cor. ii. 13.} they were with a wisdom, as in itself far more excellent, so more suitable to the persons they sustain- d ; with great perspicacy and sound judgment in he matters they discoursed about, and in the af- airs they pursued : such their writings, according o acknowledgment of innumerable most wise and ^{2Cor. xi. 6.} ^{1Cor. ii. 13.} learned persons, fraught with admirable wisdom and heavenly philosophy, (rude indeed and simple a expression, but most exact and profound in ense,) do manifest them to have been ; such the enor of their doctrine evidenced them, shining with hat lustre and beauty, compacted with that strength nd harmony, that whoever will not confess it to ave proceeded from God, must, upon consideration, owever allow, that it could not have been devised y idiots or mean persons, but did come from per- sons of much subtily and great reach : they must e no fools who could frame a religion merely by ts own plausibility, without any external help, able

SER.M. presently to supplant all the religions in the world; XXIX. and to stand durably firm upon the foundations laid by them. Such also the notable conduct of their great affair, (notwithstanding so mighty disadvantages and difficulties,) together with the prodigious efficacy their endeavours had upon men, do evince them to have been: they surely could not be weak men, who in a plain and peaceable way confounded all the wit and policy, all the learning and eloquence, all the force and violence that withstood them. Experience did attest to the truth of what St. Paul

*Acts vi. 10. saith; The weapons of our warfare are not carnal,
1 Cor. i. 27. 2 Cor. x. 4. but mighty through God to the pulling down of
strong holds; casting down imaginations, and
every thing that exalteth itself against the know-
ledge of God, and bringing into captivity every
thought to the obedience of Christ.*

Vid. Chrys. 4. So were they qualified in their minds: it must ibid. be further also considered, as to their purposes in this case, that, in falsely venting and urging this testimony, they could not have any design gainful or beneficial to themselves; but must therein to no end be mischievous to themselves and others; abusing others indeed, but far more harming themselves; they must be supposed voluntarily to have embraced all sorts of inconvenience, and designedly to have rendered themselves miserable; courting adversity, choosing naked and barren evil for its own sake:

*1 Thess. ii. 3, 5. For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of un-
cleanness, nor in guile: for neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke
of covetousness; God is witness: neither of men
sought we glory. Profit, honour, or pleasure, (those
baits which entice men to do evil, and set them upon*

*πός αἰρετούσιν
μανίαν
και λύσην
νέριν, &c.
Chrys. in
1 Cor. Or.
5. elegan-
tissime.*

wicked attempts,) or any worldly advantage thence S E R M.
to accrue to themselves, they could have no design XXIX.
upon ; for all those things wittingly and willingly
they did abandon ; for the sake of this very testi-
mony incurring extremities of loss, of disgrace, and
of pain. They did plainly foresee what entertain-
ment their testimony would find, and how in prose-
cution thereof they should be forced to endure all
kinds of indignity, of damage, and of hardship from
men ; that *in this world they should have tribula-* John xvi.
tion ; that men should deliver them up to be af- ^{33. xv. 20.}
flicted, and should kill them ; and that they should
be hated of all nations for his name's sake ; their Matt. xxiv.
Master expressly had forewarned them, that *all who* ^{9.} Luke xxi.
would live godlily in Christ Jesus (that is, all pro- ^{12.}
fessors of faith in him, especially the teachers there- ^{2 Tim. iii.}
of) *must suffer persecution ; and must through* ^{Act. xiv. 22.}
much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God ; ^{xx. 23.}
that bonds and imprisonments did abide them in
every place ; that God had set forth the apostles ^{1 Cor. iv. 9.}
as appointed unto death, and exposed them as
spectacles of scorn and obloquy to the world ; that
they were called to suffering, and appointed to ^{1 Pet. ii. 21.}
this very thing, as to their office and their portion : ^{1 Thess. iii.}
_{3.}
these were the rules and measures they went by ;
these the expectations they had from the world : ac-
cording unto which it did in effect happen to them ;
Even to this present hour we both hunger and ^{1 Cor. iv.}
thirst, and are naked, and have no certain dwell- ^{11, 12, 13.}
ingplace ; and labour, working with our hands : ^(2 Cor. iv. 8.)
being reviled, we bless ; being persecuted, we suffer
it ; being defamed, we entreat : we are made as
the filth of the world, and as the offscouring of all

SERM. *things unto this day.* So doth St. Paul describe the
XXIX. apostles' condition.

5. All these afflictions, as they knowingly did object themselves to for the sake of this testimony, so they did endure them with contentedness and joy; ^{Acts v. 41.} when they had been beaten, *they departed, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame* ^{1 Pet. iv. 13.} *for the name of Jesus; rejoicing that they were made partakers of Christ's sufferings;* deeming it ^{Phil. i. 29.} a privilege that *was given them, not only to believe in him, but to suffer for his name;* thinking them- ^{1 Pet. iv. 14.} *selves happy in being reproached for the name of* ^{Heb. x. 34.} *Christ; taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods;* ^{Phil. iii. 9.} *counting all things but loss for the excellency of* ^{(1 Pet. i. 6.} ^{Rom. v. 3.} ^{Jam. i. 2.)} *the knowledge of Jesus Christ their Lord, for whom they suffered the loss of all things.*

6. Whence it is evident enough, that the satisfaction of their conscience, and expectation of future reward from God for the discharge of their duty herein, was all the argument which did induce them to undertake this attestation, all the reason that could support them in it; neither of which could be consistent with the resolved maintenance of such a falsehood. They could not indeed but grievously be tormented with remorse in their minds, they could not but dread severe vengeance from heaven, had they been conscious to themselves of so villainous a design of mocking God, (whose name and express command they pretended, whose testimony and judg- ^{Acts iv. 10.} ^{v. 20.} ^{2 Cor. ii. 17.} ^{iv. 2.} ^{2 Cor. ix. 10.} ^{ment they appealed to in this affair,) and together} ^{of abusing the world with such an imposture.} Such must have been their inward sense, and such their expectations, had they proceeded with guilty con-

science in this business : but they do seriously profess otherwise, and the condition of things might assure us they were in good earnest ; *Eἰς τοῦτο, Φόρ* ^{Tim. iv.} *this end,* saith St. Paul, *we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe :* and, *Our rejoicing is this, the testimony* ^{2 Cor. i. 12..} *of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world :* and, *Knowing the fear of the Lord,* (that is, being sensible of our duty toward God, and fearful of his judgment, if we transgress it,) *we persuade men ; but are made manifest unto God.* So they declare what principle it was that moved them to this practice : and the hope encouraging them in it they often express : *If, said they, we suffer with Christ, we shall be glorified together with him :* ^{Rom. viii. 17.} and, *We always bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body :* and, *It is a faithful saying, if we are dead with him, we shall also live* ^{2 Tim. ii. 11. (1 Pet. i. 7. 4. 13.)} *with him ; if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him ; if we deny him, he also will deny us :* and, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith ; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.* So they profess concerning the grounds and reasons of their maintaining this testimony (and the points connected therewith) with so great present inconvenience to themselves : and the state of things rendereth their profession most credible ; for they appear not so blind as not to see those inconve-

SERM. niences, nor so fond as to like them for themselves, or upon no considerable account ; they confess, that they should be very stupid and senseless people, if they had incurred and underwent all this to no purpose, or without hope of good recompense for it after this life ; *If Christ be not risen, saith St. Paul, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain ; yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, that he raised up Christ ;—then we have only hope in this life ; and, if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.*

7. And how indeed is it conceivable, that such persons should be so bewitched with so passionate an affection, or so mighty a respect, toward a poor dead man, (one, who was born so obscurely, who lived so poorly, who died so miserably and infamously, as a malefactor ; who indeed so died to their knowledge most deservedly, supposing they did know their testimony to be false ; one who never was capable to oblige them, or to recompense them for their actings and sufferings in any valuable measure,) that merely for his sake, or rather not for his sake, but only for a smoke of vain opinion about him, (which could nowise profit either him or them,) they should with an inflexible obstinacy defy all the world ; expose themselves to all the persecutions of the world, and to all the damnations of hell. St. Paul surely had another opinion of Jesus, when he said, *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?—Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us : for I am persuaded, that neither death,*

*Rom. viii.
35, &c.*

nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Could they, think we, speak thus, who knew Jesus to be a wicked deceiver, worthily hated of God and men? No assuredly; their speech and behaviour do palpably shew that therefore they did bear so vehement an affection, and so high a respect toward Jesus, because, as with their mouths Rom. x. 9. they openly professed, so they were in their hearts thoroughly persuaded, that he was the Son of God most dear unto him; who died for their sake; who was to their knowledge raised again; who also, according to his promises, would recompense their faithful adherence to him with eternal joy and liss.

8. Again, we may consider these witnesses to Vid. Chrys. ave of themselves been persons very unlikely to tom. vi. Or. devise such a plot, very unfit to undertake it, very unable to manage and carry it through: persons they were of no reputation for birth, for wealth, for worldly interest; persons of no education, no improvement, no endowments of mind (natural or artificial) anywise considerable: ^b they were, as to condition and manner of life, fishermen, publicans, and mechanics; as to abilities of mind, they were as they report themselves) ἀγράμματος καὶ ἀιώται, ill-Acts iv. 13. literate and simple: they were also men of no great natural spirit or courage, but rather irresolute and Matt. xxvi. imporous: as their deserting their Master, their re-^{56.}John xx. ^{19.} bid.

^b Οὕτε γὰρ λόγων ἰσχυτ., &c. Chrys. tom. v. Or. 64. Τίνι θαρρήσαν-τε; ἀρτ τῷ καλέμῳ καὶ τῷ ἀγκίστρῳ, ἡ τῇ σμήνῃ καὶ τῷ τρυπάνῳ, &c. bid.

SERM. nouncing him, their flying and sculking, reported by
 XXIX. themselves, declare: *the base*, or ignoble, the *de-*

^{1 Cor. i. 27.} *spicabile*, or abject, the *weak*, the *foolish things of*
^{28.} *ἰσραήλ* *the world*, they did style themselves; and in that
επώνυμον.

^{2 Cor. iv. 7.} no adversary will, I suppose, contradict them. And

is it possible, that a few (in this respect I mean very few) persons thus conditioned and qualified, should have the wit to contrive, or the courage to maintain a forgery of such importance? What hope they could frame to themselves of any success therein, upon so extreme disadvantages, is to any man very obvious^c. No kind of friends in all the world could they imagine ready to back them, or yield them any encouragement; but heaven, hell, and earth, they had reason to expect all to be combined in opposition to them and their design: they had all reason to fear, that God himself would cross them and blast their wicked endeavours to propagate the belief of such a lie, which most profanely they dared to father on him, and to vent in his name. They could not hope the father of lies himself, or any powers of darkness, would be favourable or helpful to them; whose interest they so manifestly impugned; that the success of their doctrine, whether true or false, could not but much prejudice their kingdom; as in effect we see that it did in a manner quite subvert it: they were sure among men to encounter the most potent and most earnest adversaries that could be; all the grandees of the world, both political and religious, deeply concerned in honour and interest to labour with all their power the detection of their

^c Καὶ οὐκ ἀν οὖτας εὑτελέσι· καὶ ταπεινοῖς πιθάσαι τί τοιοῦτος ἐπῆλθε ποτε, πλὴν εἰ μαίνεσθαι τις αὐτὸς φαῖη καὶ παραπλαίειν, &c. Ibid. in Babylon.

heat, and overthrow of their design : whence it SER.M.
must be a boldness more than human, more than XXIX.
gigantic, that could bear up against all these adver-
aries, if their testimony was in their conscience
else ; against all these oppositions and disadvan-
tages, what could those poor men have to confide in,
beside the natural prevalence of truth, and divine
assistance thereto ; being in their hearts assured of
the former, and therefore greatly hoping for the lat-
er ?

9. And how indeed could such a cheat, contrived
and conducted by so, to human esteem, weak and
illy a knot of people, so easily prosper, and obtain
o wonderful a progress, so as presently to induce
very many persons, *μυριάδες πεπιστευκότων*, (*myriads
of believers*, as it is Acts xi. 20.) many of them
onsiderable, (even *πολὺν ὅχλον ιερέων*, *a great crowd* Acts vi. 7.
& company of priests, as it is said in the Acts,) to
mbrace it, together with all the crosses and da-
nages attending it ? so as to escape all inquisition 2 Thess. iii.
bout it, and overbear all persecution against it, 1. Acts xix. 20.
eing neither convincible by proof, nor controllable vi. 7. xii. 20.
y force; but in despite of all assaults holding its καὶ τὸν
round, and running forward with huge success νίκην, grew
by main
ccording to that in the Acts, *So mightily grew the
word of God and prevailed.*

10. The matter of their testimony (if we consider
hat as we should do) and its drift were very im-
lausible, such as no impostors would be likely to
orge, and no hearers, without great evidence of truth,
ould be ready to admit. ^d It was no fine story apt

^d Τί δὲ περὶ αὐτοῦ λέγοντες, ἐδόκουν ἀνθραῖς πιθανοῖ; &c. Chrys. in Cor. Or. v.

Si rem credibilem crediderunt, videant quam sint stolidi qui

SERM. to please the lusts, to flatter the humours, or to gratify the fancies of men; but rather very distasteful to flesh and blood, (whose inclinations it mainly thwarted,) likely to offend the ears of all men who should hear it; apt to raise fierce anger and indignation in Jews, great contempt and scorn in Gentiles toward it. The Jews, to whom it was first addressed, it did plainly charge with heinous iniquity and impiety in cruelly murdering a Person most innocent, most excellent in virtue and dignity, most dear to God; it withal defeated their longings for a gaudy Messias, who should restore and rear them into a lofty state of temporal prosperity, substituting in the room a spiritual King, with overtures of felicity invisible and future, little suiting their gross conceit and carnal gust of things; it also imported the abrogation of those ritual laws, and revolution of those special privileges, wherein they did so please and pride themselves; it opened the enclosures of God's favour and grace, making them common to all people; it crossed their secular interests of emolument and honour annexed to the present outward frame of religion, which it dissolved; it menaced severe vengeance and horrible desolation to their nation and city: and was such a report likely to be entertained by them otherwise than with displeasure and detestation? Neither unto the Gentiles was it likely to be acceptable; for it did also subvert all the religion established among them by law and custom, destroying consequently all the interests of those who were concerned in upholding there-

non credunt: si autem res incredibilis credita est, etiam hoc utique incredibile est, sic creditum esse quod incredibile est, &c.
Aug. de Civitate Dei, xxii. 5. Vid. Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61.

f; such as those who made that famous uproar, SERM.
rying out, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*: XXIX.
t seemed to thwart the common maxims of poli-
y, and dictates of worldly prudence ; it could not
ut appear, to men prepossessed with admiration of
ecular wealth, power, and glory, a story most ridi-
ulously extravagant, that so pitiful and wretched a
erson, as Jesus seemed in the eye of the world to
ave been, should in this miraculous way be declared
he Son of God and Lord of all things, author of life
nd salvation to all men, sovereign object of all wor-
hip and obedience : such a story therefore it was
ot likely that any men in their senses should con-
pire to forge, should offer to obtrude on the world,
o uncapable of it, so averse from embracing it ; and
eing such, it were strange that by a general repulse
should not presently be stifled and quelled^c.

11. One would indeed think that this report, had
been false, might easily have been disproved and
ashed : they who were mightily concerned, and ^{Acts v. 28.}
s eagerly disposed to confute it, wanted no means
f doing it : they were not surprised in the matter ;
ut were forewarned of it, and did forebode it com-
ig ; they were not drowsy or neglectful, but very
pprehensive, careful and cautious in preventing it,
hat it should not be produced, or, being so, that it
ight be defeated ; for to this purpose they caused ^{Matt. xxvii.}
^{64.}

^c Εἰ γάρ καὶ τῶν πράγματων ἐκβεβηκότων — δῆμος εἰσί τινες μετὰ τοσ-
τα τεκμήρια, καὶ τῆς οἰκουμένης, ὡς εἰπεῖν, ἀπάσης τὴν μαρτυρίαν, οἱ δια-
στοῦσι τοῖς γεγενημένοις, καὶ πολλοὶ οὗτοι ἀβασανίστων καὶ ἀνεξετάστων,
· ἀν παρὰ τὴν ἀρχὴν μήτε πράγματα θεασάμενος, μήτε ματυρίας ἀξιοπί-
·ους τούτων ἔχων ταῦτην ἀν τὴν πίστιν ἐδέξατο ψυχῇ. Chrys. tom. v.
r. 64.

Tίς οὖτος ἐμεμήνει τῶν ταῦτα ἀκούοντων ὡς ψιλοῖς ἥγμασι πιστεῦσαι
ρὶ πράγματων τοιούτων ; Ibid.

SERM. the sepulchre of our Lord to be sealed up, and guarded by soldiers ; that being masters of his body, they might by exhibiting it disprove any report that should be made about his resurrection : they had full opportunity of examining the matter to the bottom ; it being fresh, and presently divulged after its being reported done ; they having also all the power and authority on their side, in furtherance of the discussion of the business : we may accordingly suppose them very zealous, diligent, and active in thoroughly sifting it, and striving to detect the falsehood there-

Acts iv. 17, in : they did so certainly ; and thereto they added 18. v. 28. strict prohibitions, fierce menaces, and bloody persecutions toward the suppression thereof ; yet could they not with all their industry confute it, nor by all their fury quell it : Why ? because it was not confutable ; because truth, prosecuted with vigorous integrity and constancy, or rather supported by divine protection and blessing, is invincible. Put case there were now the like fact by so many people reported done within these two months, wherein the church and state were in like manner exceedingly concerned, and should therefore employ all their power and care to discover the truth, one would think it impossible, that, were it an imposture, it should escape detection, and being soon, with the general satisfaction of men, quite blown away and exploded : this is the fate of all falsehood, standing merely upon its own legs, and not propped by worldly power ; but truth, as in the present case, is able to subsist by its own strength, especially Heaven being concerned to aid it¹.

¹ Οὐδεμιᾶς γὰρ δεῖται βοηθείας ἡ τῆς ἀληθείας ισχὺς, ἀλλὰ καν μηρίους ἔχῃ τὰς σβενώντας αὐτὴν, οὐ μόνον οὐκ ἀφανίζεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ δι' αὐτῶν

12. As also this testimony had no power to sustain it, so it used no sleight to convey itself into the persuasions of men ; it did not creep in dark corners, it did not grow by clandestine whispers ; it craved no blind faith of men : but with a barefaced confidence it openly proclaimed itself, appealing to the common sense of men, and provoking the world to examine it ; daring all adversaries here to confront it, defying all the powers beneath to withstand it ; claiming only the patronage of heaven to maintain it.

13. Furthermore, the thing itself, had it been counterfeit, was in all probability apt to fall of itself ; the witnesses clashing together, or relenting for their crime. That advice of Gamaliel had much reason in it ; *Refrain*, said he, *from those men, and let them alone* ; *for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought* ; καταλυθήσεται, it will of itself be dissolved or destroyed : for how indeed could it be, that among so many confederates in a juggle, not one, either checked by conscience, or daunted by hazards, or wearied and worn out by sufferings, should flinch and fall off, so as to detect the plot, disavow his fault, and retire from persecution, but that each one should persist steadfast in so high a strain of vile dissimulation ? If one had fallen off, he had certainly spoiled all the plot, opened all men's eyes, and prevented the faith of any one person to the story : and what cement could firmly combine such a pack of men to God, and to all the world, that they should continue invincibly stiff in their faith to one another, and constantly true to so τῶν ἐπηρεάζειν ἐπιχειρούντων φαιδροτέρα καὶ ὑψηλοτέρα ἄνεσι, &c. Chrys. tom. v. Or. 64.

SERM. vain a design, good to no man, worst to themselves ?
XXIX. that, I say, twelve such persons, every one for a long time, during their whole life, should persevere immoveable in so extravagant a resolution of lying, so as by no regrets or dissatisfactions from within, no threats, no perils, no troubles or pains from without, to be ever driven out of it, but should die with it in their mouths, yea, rejoice and glory in dying for it; should dying carry it into the presence of God, and dare with it to appear at his judgment, is exceedingly strange and incredible: it must therefore surely be truth alone that could set them on this design, and could uphold them steady in it; so unanimous a consent, so clear a confidence, so firm a resolution, so insuperable a constancy and patience, nothing but a sense of truth could inspire men with, nothing but a perfectly good conscience could sustain. Possible it is, that in matters of speculation and subtilty men upon slender grounds may be peremptorily opinionative, and desperately pertinacious; (this experience sheweth :) but in a matter of this nature, (a matter of plain fact and gross sense,) none can well be imagined (none especially so qualified, in such circumstances, to such purposes can be imagined) to be so wretchedly stupid, or desperately obstinate.

Aug. de
Civ.D.xxi.
5. 14. He then who doubts of the sincerity of these witnesses, or rejects their testimony as incredible, must instead of it admit of divers stranger incredibilities; refusing his faith to one fact, devious from the natural course of things, but very feasible to God; he must thence allow it to many others, repugnant to the nature of man, and to the course of human things; performed without God, yea against him.

Is it credible, that persons otherwise through all S E R M.
their lives strictly blameless and rigidly virtuous, XXIX.
(even in the more heavenly parts of goodness, in hu-
manity, meekness, peaceableness, humility, and pa-
tience,) should, against clearest dictates of conscience,
peremptorily and perseveringly commit so palpable
villainy, as to broach and propagate such an impos-
ture; that they, all whose demeanours and dis-
courses evidently did tend to the advancement of
God's glory, and promoting goodness, should so in
their hearts utterly defy God and detest goodness;
or that persons in a strain incomparably solemn and
serious should so plainly teach, so strongly press, so
otherwise uniformly practise highest good-will and
beneficence toward all men, while they were with all
their mind and might striving to gull and abuse
men? Is it conceivable, that men, otherwise in all
their actions so wise and well advised, (able to ma-
nage and to perform so great matters,) should so
zealously drive on a most vain and senseless project,
with more unwearied industry labouring to maintain
and disperse a lie, than any men beside did ever
strive in behalf of truth? Is it not marvellous, that
men in all respects so impotent, without any arms or
aids, should adventure on so high an enterprise,
should with so happy success achieve it; that naked
weakness should boldly assault, and thoroughly over-
power, the greatest might; pure simplicity should
contest with and baffle sharpest wit, subtlest policy,
and deepest learning; that rude speech (void of
strength or ornament) should effectually persuade
an uncouth and unpleasant tale, against all the finest
and strongest rhetoric in the world? Is it not strange,
that a crew of vile and base persons should so inse-

SERM. parably be linked together with no other hands, than
XXIX. deceit and dishonesty ; no truth, no virtue, no common interest helping to combine or contain them together ? Is it to be believed, that men of sense should *gratis*, for no considerable end or advantage, voluntarily embrace and patiently endure all that is distasteful to human nature, freely exposing themselves, they knew not why, only for the sake of a story, to the fury of earth and flames of hell ; eagerly sacrificing their fortunes, credits, lives, and souls themselves, to the ghost of a forlorn wretch and infamous caitiff ? is it not, in fine, prodigious, that so implausible a falsehood upon all greatest disadvantages should encounter, vanquish, and triumph over truth ? These are incredibilities indeed, able to choke any man's faith : yet he that rejects this testimony must swallow and digest them, together with others like them of as hard concoction.

15. To these things we may add, that God himself did signally countenance and ratify this testimony ; not only by conferring on the avowers thereof extraordinary graces, (invincible courage, irresistible wisdom, indefatigable industry, inflexible constancy and patience ; admirable self-denial, meekness, charity, temperance, and all virtues in an eminent degree,) not only further by a wonderful success and blessing bestowed upon their endeavours ; but by enduing them with supernatural gifts, and enabling them to perform miraculous works openly and frequently ;

Acts ii. 43. v. 12. xiv. 3. xix. 11. *So that by the hands of the apostles many wonders and signs were done among the people, the Lord giving testimony unto the word of his grace, and granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands ; so that with great power gave the*

apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all ; (that SERM. XXIX.
is, there was a great appearance of the divine favour toward them, and of the divine operation in and by them.) Yielding which kind of attestation was the ancient and usual method of God in authorizing his messengers, and approving the declaration of his mind by them, (the seal, as it were, put to the *letters credential* from heaven;) nor could God afford more convincing signs than these of his approbation to any person or design : that God did thus *συντημαρτυρεῖν* attest, as the Apostle to the Hebrews speak- Heb. ii. 4. eth, *together with these* witnesses, if the apostolical history (bearing in it all the characters of a simple, faithful, and upright narration) did not relate ; yet the effect of this testimony, so speedily and easily prevailing every where, would render it highly probable, since in likelihood, no human endeavour, without divine assistance, could accomplish a business so great and difficult : if they did no miracles, *τοῦτο μέγιστον σημεῖον*, this, as St. Chrysostom says, *was the greatest miracle that could be*, that such a testimony should without any miracle prevail.

16. Now for conclusion, all these things being considered, it is sufficiently apparent, that this testimony is above all exception ; that no matter of fact ever had, or well could have in any considerable respect, a more valid and certain proof : the greatest affairs in the world (concerning the rights and repu-

ε Ἀμήκανον γὰρ ἀνθρωπίνην ισχὺν διηθῆναι τοσαῦτα ποτέ. Chrys. in Act. i. 3. Vid. in 1 Cor. Or. v.

Si per apostolos —ista miracula facta esse non credunt, hoc nobis unum grande miraculum est, quod ea terrarum orbis sine ullis miraculis credidit. Aug. de Civ. D. xxii. 5.

SERM. tations, the estates and the lives of men) are decided
XXIX. by testimonies in all regards less weighty; so that to refuse it, is in effect to decline all proof by testimony, to renounce all certainty in human affairs, to remove the grounds of proceeding securely in any business, or administration of justice; to impeach all history of fabulousness, to charge all mankind with insufficiency, or extreme infidelity; (for if these persons were not able, or not honest enough, what men can ever be supposed such; who can by greater arguments assure their ability, or their integrity in reporting any thing?) to thrust God himself away from bearing credible attestation in any case; (for in what case did he ever or can he be conceived to yield an attestation more full or plain, than he did in this? what further can he perform needful to convince men endued with any competency of reason and ingenuity, or to distinguish them from men of contrary disposition, unreasonably and unworthily incredulous?) in fine, to distrust this testimony is therefore in effect to embrace the vanity of the most wanton or wicked sceptic.

Heb. x. 23. iv. 14. The use of all is in short this, that we should heartily thank God for so clear and strong an assurance of the truth of our faith; that we therefore firmly embrace it, and steadily persevere therein; that we obey it, and bear fruits worthy thereof in our practice; that so doing we may obtain the blissful rewards which upon those terms it propoundeth and promiseth; that we may all so do, God of his mercy grant, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom for ever be all glory and praise.

Now the God of peace, that brought again

from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

SERM.
XXIX.

Heb. xiii.
20, 21.

The third day he rose again, &c.

S E R M O N XXX.

LUKE xxiv. 46.

And he said unto them, Thus it is written; and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.

SERM. XXX. THE words of men leaving this world (as proceeding from a depth of serious concernedness, and influenced by a special providence) are usually attended with great regard, and a kind of veneration: these are such, even the words of our departing Lord: the which therefore deserve and demand our best consideration.

They respect two points of grand importance, the passion and the resurrection of our Lord; of which I shall only now consider the latter, as being most agreeable to the present season: and whereas there be divers particulars observable in them, I shall confine my Discourse to one, being the main point; couched in those words, *thus it behoved*; which import the needfulness and expediency of our Lord's resurrection: of which I shall endeavour first to declare the truth, then to shew the usefulness, by a practical application thereof.

The resurrection of our Lord may appear to have been needful and expedient upon several good accounts.

1. It was needful to illustrate the veracity, wisdom, and providence of God, by making good what he had signified in the ancient scriptures concerning it; either in mystical adumbrations, or by express predictions; understood according to those infallible expositions, which the apostles did receive from the instruction of our Lord, or from illumination of that Spirit which dictated the scriptures: the particular instances, as being obvious, and requiring large discourse, I now forbear to mention.

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2. It was needful in congruity to other events foretold, and in order to the accomplishment of those designs which our Lord was to manage: the whole economy and harmony of the evangelical dispensation, as it is represented by the prophets, doth require it: it was, according to their predictions, designed, that Christ should erect a spiritual kingdom, and administer it for ever, with perfect equity, in great peace and prosperity; that he should in our behalf achieve glorious exploits, subduing all the adversaries of our salvation, (*sin, death, and hell;*) that he should establish a new covenant, upon better promises, of another eternal most happy life, assuring to the embracers thereof an entire reconciliation and acceptance with God; that he should convert the world to faith in God, and observance of his will: in execution of these purposes, it was declared that he should undergo suffering, and be put to death in a most disgraceful and painful manner; it consequently must be supposed, that from such a death he should conspicuously and wonderfully be restored to life; how otherwise could it appear, that he did reign in glory, that he had obtained those great victories, that he had vanquished death, that

SERM. the former curses were voided, God appeased, and
XXX. mankind restored to favour by him? Had the grave swallowed him up, had God *left his soul in hell*, had he rested under the dominion of common mortality, had after his dismal passion no evidence of special favour toward him shone forth; what ground had there been to believe those great things? who would have been persuaded of them? The scripture there-

^{1 Pet. i. 11.} *fore, which foretelleth the sufferings of our Lord,*
^{Luke xxiv.} *and the glories following them;* which saith, that
^{26.} *Ps. cx. 1.* ^{Isa. liii. 10.} *having drunk of the brook in the way, he should*
^{12.} *lift up his head;* that *when he had made his soul an offering for sin, he should prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand;* that *because he had poured out his soul unto death, God would divide him a portion with the great,*
Isa. xlix. 7. *and he should divide the spoil with the strong;* that *unto him whom man despised, to him whom the nation abhorred, kings should look and arise, princes should worship;* the scripture, I say, foretelling these events, doth consequentially imply the needfulness of his resurrection.

3. It was requisite in itself; or in respect to the many great ends for which it serveth, and the excellent fruits which it is apt to produce: as will appear by reflecting on those which are suggested in the New Testament.

I pass by its particular usefulness in regard to our Lord's apostles and disciples; its serving to reinforce their faith, and rear their hopes, being staggered by his passion; to comfort them in those sorrowful apprehensions and despondencies of heart, which arose from the frightful events befalling him; to enlighten their minds by more perfect instruction,

removing their ignorance, and reforming their mistakes concerning him and *the things of his kingdom*; to furnish them with instructions and orders requisite for managing the employments committed to them; to arm them by consolatory discourses and gracious promises of support against the difficulties, hazards, and troubles they were to encounter, in the profession and propagation of his doctrine; in fine, by all his admirable deportment with them, and his miraculous departure from them, to confirm them in their faith, and encourage them in their duty: these particular uses, I say, we shall pass over, insisting only upon those more common ends and effects in which ourselves and all Christians are more immediately concerned.

4. A general end of it was the production and corroboration of faith in us concerning all the doctrines of our religion; for that by it the truth of all our Lord's declarations concerning his own person, his offices, his power, his precepts and his promises, (to the highest pitch of conviction and satisfaction,) was assured; it being hardly possible, that any miracle could be greater in itself for confirmation of the whole, or more proper for ascertaining the parts of our religion. But more particularly;

5. First, From it the dignity of our Lord's person and his especial dearness to God (to the voidance of all exceptions and surmises against him) did appear.

If the meanness of his birth and parentage, if the low garb and dim lustre of his life, if the bitter pains and shameful disgraces of his death, (however accompanied with rare qualities shining in him, and wonderful deeds achieved by him,) in persons

SERM. standing at distance, casting superficial glances on
XXX. things, and judging by external appearances, might
John vii. 24. breed disadvantageous apprehensions or suspicions
concerning him, whether he were indeed, as he pretended, the Son of God, designed by him to be the
Saviour of mankind, *the Lord of all things*, the
Judge of the world; the wonderful power and signal favour of God demonstrated in his resurrection,
served to discuss those mists, and to correct such mistakes, evincing those temporary depressions to
have been only dispensations preparatory toward his
greater exaltation in dignity and apparent favour
2 Cor. xiii. with God; *for though*, saith St. Paul, *he was crucified out of weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God*; that is, although in his sufferings the infirmity of our nature assumed by him was discovered,
yet by his recovering life the divine power attending him was eminently declared; it was indeed
Eph. i. 19.
^{Ἐπειδὴ λοιπὸν τὸν δικαίον μὲν—τὸν γὰρ τὸν οὐκ εἰπέται τὸν ἰσχὺν.}
an excessive grandeur of power, an energy of the might of strength which God did exert in the raising of Christ from the dead, as the apostle laboureth to express the unexpressible eminency of this miracle; and being so high an instance of power, it was consequently a special mark of favour; God not being lavish of such miracles, or wont to stretch forth his arm in behalf of any person to whom he doth not bear extraordinary regard: the which consequence also, by reflecting on the circumstances and nature of this event, will further appear.

He was persecuted and put to death as a notorious malefactor, and an enemy to God, to true religion, to the common peace, to goodness; and his being delivered up to suffer was an enforcement of that pretence; for his adversaries thence did argue,

that God had disavowed and deserted him ; they S E R M. insulted over him, as one in a forlorn condition, XXX.
esteeming him, as the prophets foretold, stricken, Isa. liii. 4.
Ps. lxxi. 11.
smitten of God, and afflicted : but God thus, by his his xxii. 8.
own hand, undoing what they had done against
him, did plainly confute their reasonings ; did evi-
dence their accusations to be false, and their sur-
mises vain ; did, in opposition to their suggestions,
approve him a friend and favourite of God, a patron
of truth, a maintainer of piety and peace ; one mer-
iting, because obtaining, the singular countenance
and succour of God.

And if yielding our Lord over to death (which
being a total incapacity of enjoying any good, doth
signify an extremely bad state) might imply God's
displeasure or disregard toward him, (as indeed it
did in a sort, he standing in our room to undergo
the inflictions of Divine wrath and justice;) then,
answerably, restoring him to life (which, as the
foundation of enjoying any good, doth represent the
best condition) must demonstrate a singular tender-
ness of affection, with a full approbation and accept-
ance of his performances : this indeed far more
pregnantly doth argue favour, than that could imply
displeasure ; for that may happen to the best men
upon other grounds, this can bear no other than a
favourable interpretation.

Further, to give life doth ground that relation
which is deepest in nature, and importeth most af-
fection ; whence, in the holy style, to raise up to
life, is termed to beget ; and *the regeneration* is put Acts xiii. 33.
for the *resurrection* ; so that it being a paternal act, Matt. xix. 28.
signifieth a paternal regard ; and thence perhaps St. Rom. i. 4.
Paul telleth us, that our Lord *was declared, or de-*

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XXX. *fined to be the Son of God, by his resurrection
from the dead.*

6. Secondly, By our Lord's resurrection we may be assured concerning the efficacy of his undertakings for us: for considering it we may not doubt of God's being reconciled to us, of obtaining the pardon of our sins and acceptance of our persons, of receiving all helps conducible to our sanctification, of attaining final happiness, in case we are not on our parts deficient; all those benefits by our Lord's resurrection, as a certain seal, being ratified to us, and in a manner conferred on us.

As God, in the death of our Lord, did manifest his wrath toward us, and execute his justice upon us; so in raising him thence correspondently God did express himself appeased, and his law to be satisfied; as we in his suffering were punished, (*the iniquity of us all being laid upon him,*) so in his resurrection we were acquitted and restored to grace; as Christ did merit the remission of our sins and the acceptance of our persons by his passion, so God did consign them to us in his resurrection; it being that formal act of grace, whereby, having sustained the brunt of God's displeasure, he was solemnly reinstated in favour, and we representatively, or virtually, in him; so that (supposing our due qualifications, and the performances requisite on our parts) we thence become completely justified, having not only a just title to what justification doth import, but a real instatement therein, confirmed by the resurrection of our Saviour; whence *he was, saith St. Paul, delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification;* and, *Who then, saith the same apostle, shall lay any thing to the charge*

Rom. viii. 33, 34.

2 Cor. v. 15.

of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is SERM.
he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea XXX.
rather, that is risen again: our justification and
absolution are, ye see, rather ascribed to the resur-
rection of Christ, than to his death; for that indeed
his death was a ground of bestowing them, but his
resurrection did accomplish the collation of them; for
since, doth the apostle argue, God hath acknowledged
satisfaction done to his justice, by discharging our
surety from restraint and from all further prosecu-
tion; since in a manner so notorious God hath declared
his favour toward our proxy; what pretence can be
alleged against us, what suspicion of displeasure can
remain? Had Christ only died, we should not have
been condemned, our punishment being already un-
dergone; yet had we not been fully discharged, with-
out that express warrant and acquittance which his
rising doth imply: so again may St. Paul be understood
to intimate, when he saith, *If Christ be not raised,* ^{1 Cor. xv.}
your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins: death ^{17.}
(or that obligation to die, to which we did all for
our transgressions stand devoted) was *condemned*, ^{Heb. ii. 14.}
and judicially *abolished* by his death; but it was ^{2 Tim. i. 10.}
executed and expunged in his resurrection; in which ^{Rom. viii.}
trampling thereon he crushed it to nothing: where- ^{3. v. 18. vi.}
fore therein mankind revived, and received *the gift* ^{23.}
of immortality; that being a clear pledge and full ^{1 Cor. xv.}
security, that *as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall* ^{14.}
all be made alive: He, saith St. Chrysostom, ^{Morte cal-}
by his resurrection dissolved the tyranny of death, ^{cata sur-}
and with himself raised up the whole world^a: By ^{rexit Hier.}
the pledge of his resurrection, saith St. Ambrose, ^{Ep. 129.}
^{i. Cor. v. 21.}

^a Διὰ τῆς ἀναστάσεως τοῦ θανάτου τυραννίδα κατέλυσε. Chrys. Rom. i. 4.

Τὴν οἰκουμένην ἔστι συναέστησε. Chrys. tom. v. Or. 84.

SER.M. *he loosed the bands of hell^b; Thereby, saith St. XXX.* Leo, death received its destruction, and life its beginning^c. Therein not only the natural body of Christ was raised, but the mystical body also, each member of his church was restored to life, being thoroughly rescued from the bondage of corruption, and translated into a state of immortality; so that

Eph. ii. 5, 6. Rom. viii. 21. *God, saith St. Paul, hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us together, and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*

Hence in our baptism, (wherein justification and a title to eternal life are exhibited to us,) as the death and burial of Christ are symbolically undergone by us; so therein also we do interpretatively

Coloss. ii. 13, 14. *rise with him; Being, saith St. Paul, buried with Christ in baptism, in it we are also raised together with him;* and, *Baptism, St. Peter calleth us, being 21. antitype of the passage through the flood, doth save us by the resurrection of Christ,* presented therein.

It also ministreth hopes of spiritual aid, sufficient for the sanctification of our hearts and lives; for that he who raised our Lord from a natural death, thence doth appear both able and willing to raise us from a spiritual death, or from that mortal slumber in trespasses and sins in which naturally we do lie buried,

Eph. ii. 10. Rev. xx. 6. *to walk in that newness of life* to which the gospel

Acts iii. 26. calleth us; and in regard to which, *God, saith St. Peter, having raised his Son Jesus, sent him to bless us, in turning every one of us from his iniquities.*

The same consequently is a sure earnest of our

^b Dominus suæ resurrectionis pignore vincula solvit inferni, &c.
Ambr. ad Grat.

^c Per resurrectionem Christi et mors interitum, et vita accepit initium. Leo M. Ep. 81.

salvation ; for, *If*, saith St. Paul, *when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son* ; *much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*

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Rom. v. 10.
1 Pet. iii.
21.

7. Thirdly, By our Lord's resurrection, the verity of his doctrines and the validity of his promises concerning the future state of men are demonstrated, in a way most cogent and most pertinent : any miracle, notoriously true, doth indeed suffice to confirm any point of good doctrine ; but a miracle in kind, or involving the matter contested, hath a peculiar efficacy to that purpose : so did our Lord's resurrection, in way of palpable instance, with all possible evidence to sense, directly prove the possibility of our resurrection, together with all points of doctrine coherent thereto ; (the substantial distinction of our soul from the body, its separate existence after the dissolution, and consequently its immortal nature, God's wise and just providence over human affairs in this state, the scrutiny and judgment of our actions hereafter, with dispensation of recompenses answerable;) those fundamental ingredients of all religion, most powerful incentives to virtue, and most effectual discouragements from vice ; the which, (before much liable to doubt and dispute, little seen in the darkness of natural reason, and greatly clouded in the uncertainty of common tradition,) as our Lord by his doctrine first brought into clear light, so by his resurrection he fully did shew that light to be sincere and certain.

(John xx.
31.)

2 Tim. i. 10.
Acts xxvi.
23.

Infinitely weak and unsatisfactory were all the arguments which the most careful speculation could produce, for asserting those important verities, in comparison to that one sensible experiment attesting to

SER.M. them : for if our Lord, a man as ourselves, did arise
XXX. from the dead, (his soul, which from the cross de-
 scended into the invisible mansions, returning into
 his body,) then evidently our souls are distinct from
 our bodies, and capable of subsistence by themselves; then are they apt to exist perpetually ; then may
 they be put to render an account for what is acted
 here, and accordingly may be dealt with. Hence
 may we see, that St. Paul discoursed reasonably,
Acts xvii. when he told the Athenians, that, *Now God hath
31. appointed a day, in which he will judge the world
 in righteousness, by the man whom he hath ordain-
 ed, τίστη παραγχών τάσιν, exhibiting an argument
 most persuasive to all, having raised him from the
 dead* ; that St. Peter also might well aver, that *God
4· hath regenerated us to a lively hope of an incor-
 ruptible inheritance, reserved in heaven for us, by
 the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*

^{1 Pet. i. 3.} ^d Particularly the resurrection of our bodies, restor-
 ing our perfect manhood to us, (a point wholly new
 to the world, which no religion had embraced, no
 reason could descry,) was hereby so exemplified, that
 considering it, we can hardly be tempted to doubt
 of what the gospel teacheth about it ; that he, pre-
Rev. i. 5. preceding as the *firstborn from the dead, and the first-*
Colos. i. 18. *fruits of them which sleep, as our forerunner, and the*
1 Cor. xv. *Captain of life ; we, ἐν ἴδιῳ τάγματι, in our due rank*
20. *and season, as younger sons of the resurrection, as*
Acts iii. 15. *serving under his command and conduct, in resem-*
v. 31. *blance and conformity to him, shall follow ; so that, If*
Heb. vi. 20. *If.*
1 Cor. xv. *Credentes resurrectionem Christi, in nostram quoque credi-*
23. *mus, propter quos et ille obiit et resurrexit. Tert. de Pat. 9.*
Luke xx. *Resurrectionem carnis per semetipsum primus initiavit. Cyp.*
36.
Rom. viii.
11.

^d *Credentes resurrectionem Christi, in nostram quoque credi-*
mus, propter quos et ille obiit et resurrexit. Tert. de Pat. 9.

Resurrectionem carnis per semetipsum primus initiavit. Cyp.
Ep. 73.

the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in us, he that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us ; that, If we have been planted with him in the likeness of his death, we shall also grow up in the likeness of his resurrection ; that, As we have borne the image of the earthly man, so we shall also bear the image of the heavenly ; so that God, who raised our Lord, shall also raise us by his power ; for we cannot but allow that consequence to be reasonable, which St. Paul doth imply, when he saith, If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep through Jesus will God bring with him, reducing them into a state conformable to his, by reunion of their body and soul.

8. Fourthly, It was a designed consequence of our Lord's resurrection, that he thereby should acquire a just dominion over us ; for to this end, saith St. Paul, *Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living :* by the obedience of his death he did earn that dominion, as a worthy recompense thereof ; *He did by his blood purchase us* to be his subjects and servants : but from his resurrection he began to possess that reward, and to enjoy his purchase ; it being the first step of his advancement to that royal dignity and preeminence over all flesh ; to which, in regard to his sufferings, God did exalt him ; concerning which, before his ascension, he said to his disciples, *All power is given me in heaven and earth : on so many great accounts was our Lord's resurrection behooveful ; so that it is no wonder, if God took such especial care to assure its truth, and recommend*

SERM.
XXX.

Rom. vi. 5.

Cor. xv.

22, 49.

Cor. vi.

14.

Thess. iv.

14.

Rom. xiv.

9.

Acts xx. 28.

John xvii.

2.

Phil. ii. 9.

Matt. xxviii. 18.

SERM. its belief to us ; appointing so many choice persons
 XXX. by their testimony to assert and inculcate it ; to do
Acts i. 22. so being often expressed a main part and peculiar
x. 41. xiii. design of the office apostolical. Nor is it strange,
31. that to the hearty belief and ingenuous profession
 of this one article, (it enfolding, or inferring the truth
 of all other Christian doctrines,) salvation is annex-
Rom. x. 6, ed, according to that assertion of St. Paul : *The*
9. *righteousness of faith saith thus,* (or this is the
 purport of the Christian institution,) *That if thou*
shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and
shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him
from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Nor is it much,
 that a consideration of this point should be so conti-
 nually present to the minds of the ancient Christians,
 that whenever they did meet, they should be ready
 to salute one another with a Χριστός ἀνέστη, *Christ is*
risen ; it importing so great benefits, and produc-
 ing so excellent fruits ; in regard whereto St. Paul
 expressed his so ardent desire and high esteem of
Phil. iii. 10. *knowing Christ, and the power of his resurrection*,
 as the most valuable of all knowledges ; which having
 in some measure declared, I come now briefly to apply.

1. First then ; The consideration of our Lord's re-
 surrection should strengthen our faith and quicken
 our hope in God, causing us firmly to believe his
 word, and confidently to rely upon his promises,
 especially those which concern our future state.
 God having thereby, as by a most sensible proof,
 against all objections of our feeble reason, demon-
 strated himself able, as by a most sure pledge de-
 clared himself willing, to bestow upon us a happy
 immortality, in gracious reward of our obedience :
 for seeing by so illustrious an instance God hath ma-

nifested that he is thoroughly reconcileable to sinners, that he bountifully rewardeth obedience, that death and hell are vincible, what reason can we have to distrust his fidelity, to doubt of his power, or to despair of his mercy? Surely, he that was so faithful in raising our Lord from the grave, so notably rewarding his obedience and patience, (in advancing him to supreme dignity and glory at his right hand,) will not fail also to confer on us (walking in the foot-steps of his piety) the promised inheritance of everlasting life and bliss, the never-fading crown of righteousness and glory. Surely, by this noble experiment we are clearly informed, and should be fully persuaded, that nothing can destroy us, nothing can harm us, nothing can separate us from our God and our happiness; that no force, no fraud, no spite of men, or rage of hell, can finally prevail against us; what then reasonably can be dreadful or discouraging to us, what should be able to drive us into distrust or despair?

2. This point affordeth matter of great joy, and an obligation thereto. If the news of our Saviour's first birth were (as an angel called them) *good tidings of great joy to all people*, how much more may the news concerning this second nativity of him be hugely gladsome! for in that birth he did but assume our flesh; in this he did advance it: then he began to sustain our infirmities; now he surmounted them: by his incarnation he became *subject to death*; by his resurrection death was subdued to him: at that he entered into the field, and set upon the bloody conflict with our foes; in this he returned a triumphant conqueror, having utterly vanquished and quelled them: the fury of the world, the malice

Luke ii. 10.Phil. ii. 8.
1 Cor. xv.
57.

SERM. of hell, the tyranny of sin, the empire of death, all
XXX. of them combined to render us miserable, he did in his resurrection perfectly triumph over : and doth it not then become us to attend his glorious victories with our joyful gratulations ? ^c Is it not extremely comfortable to behold our gallant champion, (the only champion of our life and welfare,) after all the cruel blows which the infernal powers laid on him, after all the ghastly wounds which human madness did inflict, after he had passed through the scorching flames of divine wrath and justice, after he had felt the sorest pangs of death, perfectly recovered from all those distresses ; standing upright, and trampling on the necks of his proud enemies ? Are not most sprightly expressions of gratitude, are not most cheerful acclamations of praise due from us to the invincible *Captain of our salvation* ? Shall we not with great alacrity of mind contemplate the happy success of that mighty enterprise, wherein no less our welfare than his glory was concerned ? Is it not a pleasure to consider ourselves so exempted from that fatal doom, to which all human race was sentenced ; to see life and immortality so springing forth upon us ; to view ourselves, the children of dust and corruption, from hence in age and dignity so nigh equalled to the firstborn sons of the creation ?

It is said of the first disciples, that although they saw and felt our Lord risen, yet *for joy they could*

^c Σήμερον ἡμῶν τὰ λαμπερὰ νικητήρια γέγονε. σήμερον ἡμῶν ὁ δεσπότης τὸ κατὰ θανάτου τρόπαιον στήσας, καὶ τοῦ διαβόλου τὴν τυραννίδα καταλύσας τὴν διὰ τῆς ἀναστάσεως ὅδον ἡμῖν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἔχαρισατο.

'Η ποθειὴ καὶ σωτήριος ἑορτὴ — ἡ τῆς εἰρήνης ἵπιθεσις, ἡ τῆς κατάλλαγῆς ἀφορμὴ, ἡ τῶν πολέμων ἀναίρεσις, ἡ τοῦ θανάτου κατάλυσις, ἡ τοῦ διαβόλου ἡττα——Chrys. tom. v. Or. 85.

not believe it; so incredibly good was the news SERM. to them; excess of love and delight choked, or XXX. rather suspended their faith: we cannot be such infidels from surprise; but let us be as faithful in Luke xxiv. 41. our joy.

3. Great consolation surely it ought to breed in us, to consider, that by this event our redemption is completed, and we become entirely capable of salvation; that in it a full discharge is exhibited from the guilt and from the punishment of all our sins, whereof we do truly repent; that God's justice appeareth satisfied, and his anger pacified; that his countenance shineth out clearly with favour and mercy toward us; that our condemnation is reversed, our ransom is accepted, our shackles are loosed, and our prison set open; so that with full liberty, security, and hope, we may walk forward in the paths of righteousness toward our better country, the region of eternal felicity. Further,

4. This consideration should be a forcible engagement upon us to obedience and holy life. Our Lord Rom. xiv. 9. did by his resurrection gain a dominion over us, unto which if we do not submit, we shall be very injurious and wicked; unto which if we do not correspond by all humble observance, we shall be very ingrateful and undutiful; *He was raised to bless us, in turn-* Acts iii. 26. *ing every one of us from our iniquities*; and no less unhappy than unworthy we shall be, if we defeat that gracious purpose; it is the condition of our obtaining the happy fruits and benefits of his resurrection, that we should ourselves rise with him *unto Rom. vi. 4.* *righteousness and newness of life*; by not complying therewith, we shall render his resurrection unprofitable to us, becoming unworthy and incapable

Quod credunt tardius, non est perfidie, sed amoris.
Chrysost.
Serm. 81.

SERM. of any good advantage thereby. *Awake, saith the apostle, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead,*
XXX. *and Christ shall give thee life;* to awake from our spiritual slumber, to arise from dead works, are the terms on which Christ doth offer that eternal happy life: for as the pains and ignominies of his death will

Phil. iii. 10. nowise avail those who are not *conformable to his death, in dying to sin and mortifying their lusts;* so will not they be concerned in the joys and glories of his resurrection, who are not *planted in the likeness thereof* by renovation of their minds and re-

2 Cor. v. 15. formation of their lives; for as *he died, so he was also raised for us, that we should not henceforth live to ourselves, but unto him who died and rose again for us:* our sins did slay him; it must be our repentance that reviveth him to us, our obedience that maketh him to live in our behalf; for Christ is not in effect risen to impenitent people: as they continue dead in trespasses and sins, as they lie buried in corruption of heart and life, so *their condemnation abideth, and death retaineth its entire power*

Phil. iii. 11. over them; they shall not *κατατάγεις τὴν ἐξαστασην, attain unto that happy resurrection,* whereof our Lord's resurrection was the pledge and pattern; so

John iii. 36. did our Lord assure in his preaching; *He, said our Lord, that believeth in the Son (that is, who with a sincere, strong, and lively faith, productive of due obedience, believeth in him) hath everlasting life;* but *ὁ ἀπειθῶν, he that disobeyeth (or with a practical infidelity disbelieveth) the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him;* whence we may

Rom. viii. 12, 13. well infer with St. Paul, *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh: for if we live after the flesh, we shall die; but if*

through the Spirit we do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live ; that is, assuredly by obeying God's will we shall obtain, by disobedience we must forfeit, all the benefits of our Lord's resurrection.

5. Lastly, The contemplation of this point should elevate our thoughts and affections unto heaven and heavenly things, above the sordid pleasures, the fading glories, and the unstable possessions of this world; for *him we should follow whithersoever he goeth*; Rev. xiv. 4.
Eph. ii. 6. rising with him, not only from all sinful desires, but from all inferior concerns, soaring after him in the contemplation of our minds and affections of our heart; that *although we are absent from the Lord in the body, we may be present with him in spirit*, 2 Cor. v. 6.
Phil. i. 23.
iii. 20.
Matt. vi. having our conversation in heaven, and our heart there, where our treasure is; for if our souls do still grovel on the earth, if they be closely affixed to worldly interests, deeply immersed in sensual delights, utterly enslaved to corruption, we do not 2 Pet. ii. 19.
Rom. viii.
21. partake of our Lord's resurrection, being quite severed from his living body, and continuing in vast distance from him: I shall therefore conclude, recommending that admonition of St. Paul; *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God : set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth : for you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God ; that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then ye may also appear with him in glory.* Amen.

Gal. vi. 8.
Rev. iii. 1.
1 Tim. v.
(6.)
Col. iii. 1—4

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Heb. xiii.
20, 21.

SERM. covenant, make us perfect in every good work to
XXX. do his will, working in us that which is wellpleas-
ing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be
glory for ever and ever. Amen.

He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God.

S E R M O N XXXI.

MARK xvi. 19.

He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

OUR Lord after his resurrection having consum- SERM.
mated what was requisite to be done by him upon XXXI.
earth, for the confirmation of our faith, and the constitution of his church; having for a competent time conversed with his disciples, enlightening their minds with knowledge of the truths concerning him, and in right understanding of the scriptures relating to him; establishing their faith in immoveable conviction, inflaming their affections by pathetical discourse, comforting their minds with gracious promises against tribulations ensuing, and arming their hearts with courage and patience against all oppositions of earth and hell; directing and prescribing to them how they should proceed in the instruction of men, and conversion of the world to the belief of his doctrine, the acceptance of his overtures, the observance of his laws; furnishing them with authority, and giving them orders to attest the truth concerning him, to dispense the grace and mercy procured by him, and to promulgate the whole will of God to

SERM. mankind; promising them spiritual gifts and aids
XXXI. (both ordinary and extraordinary) necessary or con-
 ductible either to the common edification or to the
 particular welfare of Christians; ordering them to
 collect and compact the society of faithful believers
 in him, which *he had purchased with his blood*; in
 fine, imparting to them his effectual benediction, and
 a promise of continual assistance in the prosecution
 of those great and holy designs which he committed
 to their management; having, I say, accomplished
 all these things, which St. Mark in this verse express-
 eth briefly by the words μετὰ τὸ λαλῆσαι αὐτοῖς, *after*
 Acts i. 2. *he had spoken to them*; and which St. Luke com-
 priseth in the words ἐντειλάμενος αὐτοῖς, that is, having
 imparted to them all needful instructions, and im-
 posed all fitting commands upon them; he in their
 presence departed away into the possession of his
 glorious state; *He was*, saith St. Mark in our text,
received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand
of God.

Which words of the evangelist do contain two
 grand points of our faith, The *ascension of our*
Lord to heaven, and his *session there at God's right*
hand; the right understanding and due considera-
 tion whereof [as it is now peculiarly, when the
 church recommendeth these points to be the sub-
 jects of our devotion most seasonable, so perpetually]
 is of great use for the edification of our souls and the
 direction of our practice: in order to which pur-
 poses, I shall endeavour to explain them, to confirm
 the truth of them, to shew the ends and effects of
 them, and practically to apply them.

I. *He was received into heaven*; this is the first
 point, wherein we may observe the *act*, and its *term*:

the *act*, ἀνελήφθη, he was assumed, or *taken up*, saith SERM.
St. Mark *hère*; ἀνεφέρετο, he was elevated, or *car-*
ried up; and ἐπέρθη, *he was borne up*, saith St. Luke; *Luke xxiv.*
ἐπερεύθη, *he went into heaven*, saith St. Peter: which *Acts i. 9.*
phrases do import, that he was, according to his hu-^{51.}
_{22.}
manity, (or that his body and soul united together
were,) translated by the divine power into heaven;
or that he as God (by the divine power immanent
in him) did transfer himself as man thither; so that
he both was carried and did go with a proper local
motion, the term whereof was heaven.

And what is meant by *heaven*, in the proper sense
adequate to this matter, may appear from other
places equivalent, by which this action, or the result
thereof are expressed. It is called *ascending to his* ^{John xx.}
Father, and *passing out of this world to his Fa-*^{17.}
_{xiii. 1.}
ther; that is, departing hence into the place of God's
more especial presence and residence; where *he*, as
the Apostle to the Hebrews saith, *appeareth to the* ^{Εμφανίσ-}
face of God; *being*, as St. Peter speaketh, *exalted to* ^{εν τῷ οὐρα-}
the right hand of God; (that is, to the greatest prox-^{Heb. ix. 24.}
_{Actii. 38.}
imity, and therefore highest eminency, with God.) *It* ^{7. 31.}
_{Tim. iii.}
is termed being *taken up into glory*, and *entering* ^{16.}
_{Luke xxiv.}
into his glory; that is, into a most glorious place ^{26.}
and state peculiar to him; that place which St. Peter
calleth μεγαλοπρεπῆς δόξα, the magnificent, or *most ex-* ^{2 Pet. i. 17.}
cellent glory. It is styled *entering εἰς τὸ ἐσώτερον τοῦ* ^{Heb. vi. 19.}
καταπετάσματος, into the *most inward part behind the* ^{Διαβρύσ-}
veil; and into the τὰ ἅγια, the especially *holy places*; ^{Heb. iv. 12.}
_{ὑπεράνθρωπος.}
that is, into the inmost recesses of glory, inaccessible, ^{Eph. iv. 10.}
and in degree incommunicable, to any other. He
is said to have *passed through the heavens*, (that
is, through all places inferior to the highest top of
glory and felicity;) to have *ascended ἵνεράν πάντων* ^{Τυπλότ-}
_{ρον. Heb. vii. 26.}

SERM. τὸν ὅπαν, over above all the heavens; to have become higher than the heavens, or advanced above them: by which expressions it appeareth, that the term of our Saviour's ascent, called *heaven* here, was that place of all places in the universe of things in situation most eminent, in quality most holy, in dignity most excellent, in glory most illustrious; the Heb. ix. 11, inmost sanctuary of God's *temple* above, ^{22.} not made with hands; the most august chamber of presence in the celestial court: and whereas there are, as our John xiv. 2. Lord telleth us, *many mansions*, or apartments, in the house of God, the chief and best of them our Lord hath taken up for his residence; whereas heaven is a place of vast extent, to the utmost top thereof our Lord hath ascended, even into that φῶς, ^{1. Tim. vi. 16.} ἀτύπιτον, *inaccessible light* where *God dwelleth*.

And there, as it followeth, *he sitteth at God's right hand*; the meaning of which words it is not difficult to find out; it being obvious and clear, that the state of things above, in the other blessed world, is in the scripture represented to us by that similitude, which is most apt to beget in us reverence toward God, and which indeed really doth most resemble it; by the state of a king here, sitting upon his throne, being surrounded with personages of highest rank, worth, and respect; his nearest relations, his dearest favourites, the chief officers of his crown, and ministers of his affairs there attending upon him; so that yet for distinction, some place more eminent, and signally honourable, is assigned to that person, to whom the king pleaseth to declare most especial favour and regard; the which place by custom, grounded upon obvious reason, hath been of Psal. cxviii. old, and continueth still, determined to the *next* ^{16.}

place at *the right hand*; (the *next* place, because nearness yieldeth opportunity for all kind of conversation and address; at *the right hand*, because that hand hath advantage for strength and activity acquired by use, and therefore hath a special aptitude to offer any thing, or to receive, as occasion doth require;) hence for instance of the custom among those from whom the phrase is taken, when Bathsheba, king Solomon's mother, did come unto him, it is said; *The king—sat down upon his throne, and caused* ^{1 Kings ii.} *a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat* ^{19.} *on his right hand*: thus our Lord, as man, in regard to his perfect obedience and patience, being raised by God to the supreme pitch of favour, honour, and power with him, God having *advanced him to be* ^{Acts v. 31.} *a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins; having superex-* ^{Phil. ii. 9,} *alted him, and bestowed on him a name above all* ^{10.} *names, to which all knees in heaven, in earth, and under the earth must bow; having seated him* ^{Eph. i. 20.} *in heavenly places above all principality, and au-* ^{21.} *thority, and power, and dominion, and name that is named, either in the present world, or in that which is to come; having committed to him all au-* ^{Matt.} *thority in heaven and upon earth, and given all* ^{xxviii. 18.} *things into his hand; having constituted him heir* ^{John iii. 35.} *of all things, and subjected all things under his* ^{xiii. 3. xvii. 2.} *feet, and crowned him with sovereign glory and ho-* ^{Heb. i. 2.} *nour; having, in fine, given unto him all that which* ^{ii. 8, 9.} *in the Revelation the innumerable host of heaven acknowledgeth him worthy of; power, and riches,* ^{1 Pet. iii. 22..} *Rev. v. 2. and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing; that is, all good and excellency conceivable in the most eminent degree, so that γίνεται*

SER.M. εν ταῖσι πρετεῖαι, he *in all things becometh to have the preeminence*; God having, I say, conferred all these
XXXI.
 Col. i. 18. preeminences of dignity, power, favour, and felicity
 Eph. i. 20. upon our Saviour, is therefore said to have *seated*
 Matt. xxvi. 64. *him at his right hand; at the right hand of power,*
 Mark xiv. 62. say the Gospels; that is, so at the right hand of the
 Luke xxii. 69. Almighty Potentate, that all power is imparted to
 him for the governance and preservation of his
 Heb. viii. 1. church; *at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and at the right hand of the throne of God*, saith
 the Apostle to the Hebrews; that is, so at the right
 hand of the Sovereign King of the world, that royal
 dignity is communicated to him; in regard to which
 all honour and worship, all service and obedience,
 are due to him from all creatures.

Thus much plainly the whole speech, *sitting at God's right hand*, doth import; the which matter
 is otherwise more generally and simply expressed
 1Pet. iii. 22. by being at God's right hand; *Who, saith St. Peter, is gone into heaven, and is at the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being*
 Rom. viii. 34. *made subject to him: and, It is Christ, saith St. Paul, that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is also at the right hand of God:* sometimes also
 our Lord is represented standing at God's right hand, as in the Revelation several times, and in the
 Rev. v. 6. vision of St. Stephen, who *saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God;* the
 xiv. 1. which posture doth then seem purposely assigned to
 Acts vii. 55, 56. him, when he is represented assisting his servants, or in readiness to achieve some great work for the
 good of his church; but most commonly, as in our text, it is called *sitting*; the which word in ordinary
 use denoteth an abode, or permanency, in any state:

but there is, perhaps, some peculiar emphasis design- SERM.
ed in attributing to our Lord that position ; it imply- XXXI.
ing the solid ground, the firm possession, the durable
continuance, the undisturbed rest and quiet of that
glorious condition, wherein he is instated : the term
sitting may also seem to augment the main sense ;
for that *sitting* is the most honourable posture, and
therefore implieth to the utmost that eminency of
favour and regard which our Lord enjoyeth in God's
sight. It may further also denote the nature, qua-
lity, and design of our Lord's preferment ; his being
constituted our ruler and our judge ; *sitting* being a
posture most proper and peculiar to such persons ;
whence this expression representeth him as seated
upon a throne of majesty, or upon a tribunal of just-
ice^a.

I shall only further observe, that the attainment
and settlement of our Lord in this high state is by
one word frequently in scripture called his glorifica-
tion ; *The Spirit*, it is said, *was not yet, because John vii. 39.*
Jesus was not yet glorified : and, *When Jesus xiii. 16, 23.*
was glorified, then they remembered that these xiii. 32.
things were written of him : and, *The hour is xvii. 1, 5.*
come, that the Son of man should be glorified : and,
Now, Father, prayeth our Saviour, glorify me with
thee, with the glory which I had with thee before
the world was ; that is, constitute me as mediator in
glory supereminent above all creatures, accordingly
as in my divine nature I was eternally with thee
most gloriously happy : and, *The God of your fa-* *Acts iii. 13.*

^a Sedere judicantis est, stare pugnantis ; Stephanus ergo in la-
bore certaminis positus stantem vidit, quem adjutorem habuit ;
sed hunc post ascensionem Marcus sedere scribit, quia post ascen-
sionis suæ gloriam Judex in fine videbitur. *Leo M.*

SERM. *thers, saith St. Peter to the Jews, hath glorified his child Jesus, whom ye delivered up:* and, *We see*

Heb. ii. 9. *Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews. So much for explication of these points.*

II. The confirmation of them may be drawn partly from *ocular testimony*, partly from *rational deduction*, partly from *their correspondence to ancient presignifications and predictions*.

Acts i. 9. The ascension of our Lord toward heaven was testified by the apostles, who were eyewitnesses thereof; for *βλεπόντων αὐτὸν, they beholding, he was,* saith St. Luke, *taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.*

Luke xxii. 69. His arriving at the supreme pitch of glory, and Matt. xxvi. 64. sitting there, is deduced from the authority of his own word, and of his inspired disciples, the which standeth upon the same grounds with other points of Christian faith and doctrine; the which it is not seasonable now to insist upon.

But it may be proper and useful to consider how they (as all other important events and performances belonging to our Saviour) were by the Holy Spirit in the ancient prophets many ways presignified and predicted: that they were so, our Lord telleth us;

Luke xxiv. 25, 26. *Ought not Christ, said he, according to what the prophets had spoken, to suffer, and so to enter into*

1 Pet. i. 11. *his glory?* and St. Peter assureth us, that *the Spirit of Christ, which was in the prophets, did testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories after the same:* so indeed there were many signal types representing them, and many notable passages respecting them, interpreted ac-

cording to analogy, with other mystical representations. SERM.
XXXI.

Isaac, the heir of promise, after his being devoted for sacrifice, and *received from death in a parable*, Heb. xi. 19. was settled in a prosperous state of life, *God being with him, and blessing him in all things*. Joseph, Gen. xxvi. 3, 12, &c. being freed from that death to which by his envious brethren he was designed, and raised from that burial in prison into which by the Egyptian Gentiles he was cast, was advanced thence unto flourishing dignity, and established in chief authority over the king's house, and *over all the land*. Which persons, Gen. xli. 40. as they were in other things, so may they well be conceived in these respects to have been types of our Lord's ascension and glorification. Joshua, (who in name and performances was the most exact type of our Lord,) being preserved from the common fate of the people, and with miraculous victory over all the accursed enemies of God's people, entering as captain of Israel into the possession of the promised land, the sure type of heaven, doth fitly represent the glorious ascension of our Lord into heaven, and his everlasting possession thereof, together with the good people which follow his conduct. The great afflictions and depressions of David, with his restoration from them unto a mighty height of royal splendour and prosperity, (all enemies foreign and domestic being subdued,) may be also supposed to typify the same; his expressions in acknowledgment and thanksgiving for them seeming to allude hither, and to be more congruously applicable to our Lord, than to himself: such for instance as those are in the 21st Psalm; *He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and* Psal. xxi. 4, 5, 6.

SERM. ever : his glory is great in thy salvation ; honour
 XXXI. and majesty hast thou laid upon him : for thou
 hast made him most blessed for ever ; thou hast
 made him exceedingly glad with thy countenance,
^{Gen. v. 24.} &c. Enoch, having walked with God, (that is, in
^{Heb. xi. 5.} constant devotion, and in faithful obedience to God's
 will,) and having received testimony that he pleased
 God, was taken unto God ; thereby prefiguring the
 ascension of the well-beloved, in whom God was
 most well pleased : so was also the translation of
^{2 Kings ii.} Elijah into heaven, in presence of Elisha and other
^{11.} his disciples, after he most zealously had served
 God, in declaration of his will and maintenance of
 his truth, a manifest prelude of our Lord's like trans-
 lation, after he had been employed in the like serv-
 ice, though far more high and important, and per-
 formed it in a more eminent manner.

The high priest was a certain type of our Lord,
 and the Jewish temple a shadow of heaven, and the
^{Heb. ix. 24.} holy of holies a figure of the highest place in hea-
 ven; wherefore the high priest's sole and solemn
 entry once only in the year into the most holy place,
 after having by a bloody sacrifice made atonement
^{Lev. xvi. 16.} for all the transgressions of the children of Israel,
^{34.} Exod. xxx. and his there sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice
^{10.} Heb. ix. 7. upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat,
 (the emblem of God's special presence,) doth cer-
 tainly prefigure our Lord's ascending into heaven,
 and sitting there at God's right hand ; there, by re-
 presentation of his merits and passion performing the
 office of a most holy priest and gracious mediator
^{Heb. ix. 14.} for us ; By his own blood, saith the divine apostle,
^{24. x. 12.} he entered once into the holy place, having obtained
 eternal redemption for us : He is entered, not into

*the holy places made with hands, which are figures SERM.
of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear* XXXI.
in the presence of God for us.

Thus were these points aptly signified : they were also predicted : for David, in the 68th Psalm, celebrating the glorious triumphs of God over the enemies of his people, and in consequence upon them his solemn entrance and seating himself in Sion, the ^{Huc etiam.} hill *which he delighteth to dwell in*, (the usual emblem of heaven,) subjoineth ; *Thou hast ascended* ^{Ps. lxviii.} ^{18.} *on high,* (כִּרְבֵּן, to the high place of heaven,) *thou hast led captivity captive : thou hast received gifts for men : yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them :* which words appositely suit to our Lord's triumphant ascension, after having subdued all the enemies of his church, and upon which he liberally dispensed wonderful gifts ^{Eph. iv. 8.} and graces to his people, and are by the unerring interpretation of St. Paul applied thereto.

The ascension of our Lord seemeth also (at least according to mystical exposition reasonably grounded) to be respected in the 24th Psalm, as generally throughout, so particularly in those words, *Lift up* ^{Psal. xxiv.} ^{7, 8, 9.} *your heads, O ye gates ; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors ; and the King of glory shall come in :* where, according to the first and more literal sense, the entrance of the ark (the symbol of our Lord himself, in whom God is most specially present, *in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily*) into the temple is described : but in a second more elevate, more proper, and more full meaning, the entrance of our Lord (the true Shechinah) into heaven seemeth denoted ; the doors of that temple not made with hands, into which he, *the Lord*

SERM. XXXI. *of glory*, at his ascension did enter, being indeed most truly *the everlasting doors*; and the doors of the earthly temple being only such as typifying them.

Again, the session of our Lord at God's right hand Psal. cx. 1. is expressly foretold by David ; *The Lord, saith he, said unto my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I have made thine enemies thy footstool.* Who but the Messias could be that Lord of David, unto whom God spake ? Who but he could be an eternal priest Matt. xxii. 44 after the order of Melchizedek ? Not only therefore our Lord himself expoundeth that place of the Messias, but the ancient Jews did commonly understand it to concern him ; as appeareth by their tacit consent, and forbearing to contradict our Lord so interpreting it.

In fine, all the prophecies, which are very many, that concern the spiritual and eternal kingdom of the Messias, (his being invested with and exercising regal dignity and power over God's people for ever,) do in effect declare the ascension and session of our Psal. ii. 6, 8. Lord ; particularly those of David ; *I have set my Heb. i. 5. king upon my holy hill of Zion ; and, Thy throne, Ps. xlv. 6. O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy Heb. i. 8. kingdom is a right sceptre :* and that of Daniel ; Dan. vii. 13, 14. *I saw in the night visions one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him: and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* So were these points foreshewed and foretold, to the

manifestations of God's wisdom and the confirmation SERM.
XXXI. of our faith.

III. Now for the ends and effects of our Lord's ascension, and his abode in heaven at God's right hand, (I join them together as coincident, or subordinate,) they are in the scripture declared to be chiefly these.

In general, our Lord by them was invested in the complete exercise of all the offices, and in the full enjoyment of all the privileges, belonging to him as perfect Mediator, Sovereign King, High Priest, and Archprophet of God's church and people : he did initially and in part exercise those functions upon earth ; and a ground of enjoying those preeminences he laid here ; but the entire execution and possession of all, by his ascension into heaven, and in his session there, he did obtain particularly.

1. Our Lord did ascend unto, and doth reside in heaven, at the right hand of divine majesty and power, that as a king he might govern us, protecting us from all danger, relieving us in all want, delivering us from all evil ; that he might subdue and destroy all the enemies of his kingdom and our salvation ; the Devil with all his retinue, the world, the flesh, sin, death, and hell ; whatever doth oppose his glory, his truth, his service ; whatever consequently, by open violence or fraudulent practice, doth hinder our salvation : *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I have made thine enemies thy footstool* ; so God by the Holy Spirit in David did speak unto him : whence St. Peter doth thus infer ; *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made him Lord and Christ* ; that is, his being seated in that

Psal. cx. 1.

Matt. xxii. 44.

Heb. i. 13.

Acts ii. 36.

SERM. place of special eminency is an infallible argument
XXXI. of his royal majesty and sovereignty: and, *This*

Heb. x. 12. *man, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, after he
 13. had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat
 down at the right hand of God, from henceforth
 expecting till his enemies be made his footstool;*

1 Cor. xv. 25. and accordingly, *He must, as St. Paul saith, reign,
 until he hath put all his enemies under his feet.*

By various combats in his life, our Lord did worst
 and weaken his and our enemies; and in the last
 great battle on his cross, he did thoroughly rout and
 overthrow them; but by his triumphant ascension

Eph. iv. 8. into heaven *he led captivity captive*, enjoying the
 glory and benefit of his victory; by sitting at God's
 right hand he keepeth them down in irrecoverable
subjection under his feet, so that none of them can
 make any successful insurrection against him: for
 no power certainly shall ever be able to withstand
 his will and command, who sitteth at the helm of
 sovereignty immense and omnipotent; at that right
 hand, which can do any thing, which wieldeth and
 moderateth all things every where; no fraud can
 elude, no secret conspiracy can escape his know-
 ledge, who, sitting in that heavenly watchtower of
 infinite wisdom and omniscience, beholdeth what-
 ever is done, said, or thought in all the world.

He so there with royal might protecteth us; and
 with royal goodness, munificence, and clemency, he
 doth also thence dispense grace and mercy to his
 faithful subjects: for all good gifts and graces be-
 stowed on the church in general for common edifi-
 cation, and to each member thereof singly for its
Eph. iv. 12. particular benefit, which are useful for *perfecting of
 the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edi-*

fication of Christ's body in truth, holiness, order, SERM. and peace, are expressed to proceed from our Lord's ascension ; *To every one of you*, saith St. Paul, *is* Eph. iv. 7. given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ ; that is, to every one of you proportionably, according to the quality of your employment, rank, or station in the church, and according to the particular exigency of your needs, as Christ in wisdom seeth fit, grace is afforded ; in correspondence, addeth he, to the Psalmist's prophecy concerning our Saviour, *Having ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* Eph. iv. 8.

Particularly in virtue or consequence of his ascension and glorification, to all true penitents and converts unto God, mercy and pardon for their sins are dispensed : that repentance should be acceptable to God, and available for attainment of mercy, our Lord did indeed merit for us by his suffering ; but he effectually dispenseth it in God's name, being now instated in glory, as a noble boon of his royal clemency ; *God, saith St. Peter, exalted him as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins.* Acts v. 31. Luke xxiv. 47.

2. Our Saviour did ascend, and now sitteth at God's right hand, that he may, in regard to us, there exercise his priestly function. Having in this outward tabernacle once offered up himself a pure and perfect sacrifice for the expiation of our sins, he entered within the veil, into the most holy place, there presenting his blood before God himself, to the full effect of obtaining mercy for us, and restoring us to God's favour ; *He is, saith the apostle, entered into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us;* so that whenever we by our frailty do Heb. x. 12. Heb. ix. 24.

SERM. fall into sin, and do heartily by repentance turn unto
XXXI. God, invoking his mercy, our Lord is ready, by applying the virtue of his sacrifice, and pleading our cause with God, upon the terms of that gracious covenant purchased and ratified by his blood, to procure mercy for us : for, *If any man sin, we have, saith St. John, an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is a propitiation for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world:* and, *Who, saith St. Paul, is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us;* that is, seeing our Lord hath offered a well-pleasing sacrifice for our sins, and doth at God's right hand continually renew it, by presenting it unto God, and interceding with him for the effect thereof; what, supposing us qualified for mercy, can hinder us from obtaining it?

Our Lord also doth at God's right hand discharge the princely ministry of praying for us, and so interceding in our behalf, as thereby to acquire from God to be conferred on us whatever is needful or
Heb. vii. 25. conducible to our salvation ; *He, saith the apostle, is able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.* More particularly he, by his mediation there, doth procure for us a free access to God in devotion, a favourable reception of our petitions and services, a good success of them in the supply
Eph. ii. 8. of all our needs ; for, *Through him we have access
Heb. iv. 14. by the Spirit unto the Father ; and, Having a
vii. 25. great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God—let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy,*

and find grace in the time of need, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews: and, *He*, as he is represented in the Apocalypse, is that *angel of the covenant*, Rev. viii. 3. who at the golden altar before God doth offer up the prayers of the saints, incensed by his mediation and merits.

Hence in his name and through him it is, that we are enjoined to present our prayers, our thanksgivings, and all our services; **doing all, whatever we do, in the name of the Lord Jesus.*

3. Again, our Lord telleth us, that it was necessary he should depart hence, and enter into this glorious state, that he might there exercise his prophetic office, by imparting to us his holy Spirit for our instruction, direction, assistance, and comfort; *Behold*, said he upon his departure, *I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with the power from on high:* this he promised then to his disciples, but did not perform until his exaltation; *Being therefore*, saith St. Peter, *exalted to the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.* He did not, and indeed (in consistence with the divine purpose and the designed economy of things) could not perform this until then; *It is*, said he, *expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you:* that is, God, for promoting our Saviour's honour, and for the glory of his undertaking, had in his wisdom determined, that so incomparably excellent a gift should be the

SERM. XXXI. reward of his obedience, the consequence of his triumph, the effect of his intercession above, an ornament of his royal state, a pledge of his princely munificence: it was reserved as a most rich and majestic gratuity, fit to be conferred at his coronation, then when he solemnly was inaugurated to sovereign dignity, and invested with power superlative:

John vii. 39. whence, *the Holy Spirit*, it is said in St. John, *was not yet*, (that is, it was not yet poured forth, or bestowed in that conspicuous manner and copious measure, as God intended it should be afterwards,) *because Jesus was not yet glorified*: it was from Jesus being received into glory, and advanced to God's right hand, that so transcendent a boon was in God's purpose, and according to his promise, designed to come down.

4. Again, our Lord himself telleth us, that he *John xiv. 2.* went to heaven, there *to prepare a place for his Ps. xvi. 11.* faithful servants, to prepare *mansions of joy and bliss in God's presence, where is fulness of joy; at his right hand, where are pleasures for evermore.* He accordingly hath, as the apostle saith, *Heb. vi. 20.* entered as our *προδρόμος, our forerunner into heaven;* as an honourable harbinger, having disposed things there for our reception and entertainment; or rather, as the son and heir of that great house, he by his authority and interest there procured leave for us to enter, and reside there, or carrieth us as his retinue thither; *It is my will, saith he, that where I am, there should ye be also; that ye may contemplate my glory, and consequently may partake thereof.* It was indeed our Lord's ascension which did unlock the gates of heaven, before shut upon us

*John xvii.
24. xiv. 3.
xii. 26.*

by our sins; which quenched the flaming sword, SERM.
and discharged the mighty cherubim, which guarded XXXI.
paradise from all access to men^b.

The ancient Fathers generally were of opinion, that heaven, before our Lord's ascension, was inaccessible^c; and that no man had ever set foot therein, until our Lord, by his actual ascent and ingress, did open the passage thither, and removed the bars there^d: to prove this, they allege that of our Lord in St. John; *No man hath ascended up into heaven*, John iii. 13. *but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven*: and the forecited place, *I go to prepare a place for you*; which seemeth to John xiv. 2. imply heaven before unfit to receive men: and those places, wherein our Lord affirmeth himself to be *the gate of the sheep, and the way to the Father*: and John x. 7. xiv. 6. that of the Apostle to the Hebrews, concerning the patriarchs, and other good men before Christ's incarnation; *And these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be perfect.* Hither also they referred that of the Psalmist, *Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in:* ^{Psal. xxiv. 7, 9.} ^cwhich words they interpreted to signify the gates

^b Flammea illa rhomphæa, custos paradisi, et præsidentia foribus Cherubim Christi restincta, et reserata sunt sanguine. Hier.

Ep. 3.

^c Οὐρανὸς ἔτι ἡνὶ ἄβατος. Chrys. ad Heb. ix. 8.

^d Ante Christum Abraham apud inferos, post Christum latro in paradiſo, &c. Hier. in Epitaph. Nepot. Ep. 3.

^e Ὡταν ἐν νεκρῷ ἀνέστη Χριστός, καὶ ἀνέβη εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν, κελεύστας οἱ ἐν οὐρανῷ ταχθέντες ἄγγελοι ἀνοίξαι τὰς πύλας τῶν οὐρανῶν. Just. M.

SER.M. of heaven then to have been first opened, when our Lord did ascend thither. Joshua, a most congruous type of our Lord, leading God's people into the land of promise, did also to their sense imply our Lord's first entering into heaven. The high priest alone entering into the sanctuary, did, as they deemed, argue the same; the Apostle to the Hebrews seeming much to favour their sentiment, when he saith,

Heb. ix. 7. Into the second (tabernacle) went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, whilst the first tabernacle was yet standing.

The same also was, say they, signified by those persons, who, for offences wide of malice, were detained in the cities of refuge, and prohibited to return home, until the death of the high priest, but were afterward restored *to the land of their possession*; thereby, say they, being intimated, that until after our Saviour's death no man could return into paradise, his primitive home, from which man for his sin had been excluded; but that thenceforth all persons, in an evangelical account, not malicious or wicked, had a right and liberty to return thither¹. Upon these and the like grounds did the Fathers commonly suppose no person before our Lord's ascension to have entered heaven; but however it were as to the time, yet assuredly, in order of nature

¹ Quid est quod homicida post mortem pontificis absolutus ad terram propriam reddit? nisi quod humanum genus, quod peccando sibi mortem intulit, post mortem veri Sacerdotis, id est Christi peccatorum vinculis solvit, et in paradisi possessionem reparatur. *Greg. M. Hom. in Ezech.*

and causality, it was he that did first ascend thither; SERM. and by virtue of his ascension it is, that any man ^{XXXI.} ever did or shall ever come thither; *His blood was,* ^{Sanguis Christi est} as St. Hierome saith, *the key of paradise;* the efficacy of which he carrying up with him did unlock ^{clavis para-} it; so that thenceforth it doth stand wide open to ^{disi. Hier.} Ep. 129. those who can soar up thither, following his steps in persevering obedience. *Having therefore,* saith ^{Heb. x. 19.} the Apostle to the Hebrews, *boldness to enter into* ^{20.} *the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart:* and, *He, being per-* ^{Heb. v. 9.} *fected, (or consummated in his state of glory,) be-* ^{10.} *came to all that obey him the author of everlasting salvation; being denominated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.*

5. It was indeed an effect of our Lord's ascension and glorification, that all good Christians are with him in a sort translated into heaven, and advanced into a glorious state; being thence by him *made* ^{Rev. i. 6.} *kings and priests to God.* *We have,* saith Tertulian, in *Christ Jesus seized on heaven:* and the apostle saith as much; *Us,* saith he, *who were dead in trespasses and sins, God hath quickened together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* In many respects we thereby are raised to heaven and eminent glory.

We thence even as men become greatly dignified, our nature being so highly advanced thereby: we thereby get the honour of being brethren or kinsmen to the world's great Lord and King; so that any of

SERM. us may say with St. Austin, *Where my flesh reigns,
XXXI. there I believe myself to reign^s:* hence, as the Apostle to the Hebrews teacheth us, is that of the Psalmist verified concerning man; *Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over the works of thy hands.*
 Ps. viii. 5.
 Heb. ii. 7.

We also more as Christians are elevated thereby by our near relation to him, and our participation with him as our head: for where the head is, there the body is: they are inseparably connected; there can be no breach, no distance between them^b; and the honour conferred on the head doth necessarily accrue to the members; according to St. Paul's rule,

^{1 Cor. xii. 26.} *If one member be glorified, all the members do rejoice with it, or do partake of its joyful state. Christi ascensio nostra est provectio, The ascension of Christ is our preferment; and whither the glory of the head is gone before, thither likewise is the hope of the body called,* saith a devout Fatherⁱ.

We also are by our Lord's glorification advanced and advantaged, in that his being so glorified is a sure pledge and an earnest of that glorious reward which all good Christians shall receive. *Christ being made heir of all things, did in his ascension, adire hæreditatem, take possession of that inheritance;* and we consequently, as *coheirs with him, and having a share in the inheritance of the saints in light,* do seize thereon, acquiring therein a right and propriety at present, being assured in due time

^s Ubi caro mea regnat ibi me regnare credo. *Aug. Med.*

^b "Ενθεν η κεφαλη, εκει και τὸ σῶμα· οδενὶ γὰρ μέσῳ διείργεται η κεφαλη και τὸ σῶμα. Chrys. in Eph. x. 3.

ⁱ *Christi ascensio nostra est provectio; et quo præcessit gloria capitia, eo spes vocatur et corporis.* *Leo P.*

f by our miscarriages we do not forfeit our title) SERM.
f an actual possession thereof; *As*, saith Tertullian, XXXI.
Christ did leave to us the earnest of the Spirit, so
e received from us the earnest of the flesh, and
irried it into heaven as a pledge of the whole
um to be sometime brought in thither^k.

We do also in a manner ascend with Christ to eaven, in regard that by his ascension our principal concernments, our only considerable interests, (that κέρτων ὑπαρξίς καὶ μένουσα, better and enduring substance,) the true objects of our affection, and all our ope, are transferred thither; whence heaven becom-
h our only true country, our *abiding city*, our real come: we having here no true rest, no settled man-
on, no certain estate; but indeed being *strangers*,
journers, and pilgrims upon earth. Our πολίτευ-
z, our politic capacity, relates to heaven, or we are tizens thereof, saith St.Paul; we are *fellow-citizens* of the saints, and domestics of God; are proselytes mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, Πατρὸς τηλεοικόνης metropolis of the saints, the heavenly Jerusa-
m; we are translated into the kingdom of God's beloved Son, are called into his kingdom and glory, ave our hope laid up for us in heaven, are dead to this world, and our life is hid with Christ in God: and where we are so concerned, there especially in spirit and heart we may be supposed to

^{14.}
^{1 Pet. ii. 11.}
^{i. 17.}
^{2 Cor. v. 6.}
^{Phil. iii. 20.}
^{Eph. ii. 19.}
^{Heb. xii. 22.}
^{Πατρὸς τηλεοικόνης}
^{θαύμα.}
^{Colos. i. 13.}
^{1 Thess. ii. 1, 2.}
^{Colos. i. 5.}
^{Gal. vi. 14.}
^{ii. 20.}
^{Col. iii. 3.}

6. I might add, that God did thus advance our aviour, to declare the special regard he beareth to

^k Quemadmodum Christus nobis arrhabonem Spiritus reliquit, et a nobis arrhabonem carnis accepit, et vexit in cœlum pigis totius summæ illuc quandoque redigendæ. *Tertull. de Resurr.*

SERM. piety, righteousness, and obedience, by his so amply
XXXI. rewarding and highly dignifying the practice there-
Heb. ii. 9. of. *We, saith the apostle, see Jesus, for the suffer-
ing of death, crowned with glory and honour.* We
see him, not only as an object of our contemplation,
but as a pattern of our practice, and as a ground of
Heb. xii. 2. our encouragement ; *Looking up, saith that apostle
again, unto Jesus, the captain and the perfecter of
our faith, who for the joy that was set before him
endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set
down at the right hand of God.* God, it seemeth,
did intend, and he doth propound, our Lord's exalta-
tion, for an engagement and motive to us of follow-
ing him in the way by which he attained it ; giving
us assuredly to hope for the like rewards of glory
and joy, in proportion answerable to our imitation
of his exemplary obedience and patience.

Such are the principal ends and effects of our
Lord's ascension, and session at God's right hand ;
the consideration of which points may have great
use, should have much influence upon our prac-
tice.

1. It may serve to guard us from divers errors,
which to the dangerous prejudice and disparagement
of our religion (introducing into it notions thwart-
ing reason and sense, charging it with needless and
groundless incredibilities, exposing it to difficulties and
objections so massy, that the foundations of Christian
truth are scarce able to support them) have been and
are asserted by divers persons, or by sects of men
professing Christianity, such as are that of the old
Eutychians, who held, that the human nature of
our Lord was converted into his divinity, or swal-
lowed up thereby ; that of the German Ubiquitaries,

who say, that our Lord according to his human na- SERM.
ture corporally doth exist every where ; that of the XXXI.
Lutheran Consubstantialists, and of the Roman Tran-
substantiators, who affirm, that the body of our Lord
is here upon earth at once present in many places,
(namely, in every place where the host is kept, or
the eucharist is celebrated :) which assertions, by
the right understanding of these points, will appear
to be false. For our Lord did visibly in human shape
ascend to heaven, (which to do is inconsistent with
the invisible, omnipresent, and immoveable nature
of God,) and therefore he continueth still a man ;
and as such he abideth in heaven, and therefore he
doth not exist everywhere or otherwhere. It is the
property of a creature to have a definite existence,
or to be only in one place at one time ; for could
it be in divers places at once, it might by like rea-
son be in any or in every place, and consequently it
might be immense ; nor can we conceive a thing to
be at once in several distant places, without its being
multiplied in essence : it especially is repugnant to
the nature of a body at once to possess several places,
seeing its substance and quantity do not really differ,
or are inseparably combined, whence it cannot be
multiplied in dimensions, answerable to many locali-
ties, without being multiplied in substance ; where-
fore since our Lord, as man, did by a proper local
motion ascend, pass through, and enter into the hea-
vens, (being, as it is said in holy scripture, in the
visible form and dimensions of his body, *taken, car- Acts i. 2, 9,*
ried, lifted up, gone into heaven, parting from his^{Heb. ix. 24.}
disciples, going away from us, leaving the world^{iv. 14.}
and going to the Father ; being where no man^{Acts i. 10, 11.}
here can come, or can follow him ; being to be no^{Mark xvi. 50, 51.}
^{19. Matt. xxvi. 11.}
^{1 Pet. iii. 22.}

S E R M. *more in the world*, so that we have him not always
 XXXI. with us; being there, where we, being in the body,

John xvi. 5. are absent from him; seeing he doth now reside in
7, 10, 28.
xiv. 25. xiii. heaven, which must, as St. Peter affirmed, receive
3. viii. 33. 34.
viii. 21. xiii. (or hold) him, until the restitution of all things;
36. xvii. 11.
2 Cor. v. 6. where he constantly appeareth in God's presence
Or διαίρεσις ἡμέρας. for us, and ever liveth to make intercession for us;

Acts iii. 21. whence also we do expect, that in the like visible
Heb. vii. 25.

ix. 24. manner as he went, that he shall come again, de-

Acts i. 11. scending, as St. Paul speaketh, *from heaven*, and

i Thess. iv. 16. i. 10. coming in the clouds of heaven, at the last resurrec-

2 Thess. i. 7. *1 Cor. xv. 47.* tion and judgment, which is therefore commonly

Phil. i. 20. *Rev. i. 7.* termed his presence and appearance here;) since,

Matt. xxiv. 30. I say, according to the tenor of scripture, our Lord

*(Eis ἀνά-
τοντος Κυρίου.* did thus, as man, in his flesh go into heaven, and

1 Thess. iv. 17.) there perpetually doth abide in glory, until he shall

Παρουσία. thence return hither to judge the world, we must
Ἐπιφάνεια. not suppose him to be any where corporally upon
 earth. He is indeed every where by his Divinity
 present with us; he is also in his humanity present
 to our faith, to our memory, to our affection¹; he is
 therein also present by mysterious representation, by
 spiritual efficacy, by general inspection and influence

2 Cor. v. 6. upon his church; but in body, as we are absent
 from him, so is he likewise separated from us; we

Phil. i. 23. must depart hence, that we may be with him, in
1 Thes. iv. 17. the place whither he is gone to prepare for us.

Rom. x. 6. Who shall ascend into heaven, to bring Christ
 down thence? saith St. Paul, intimating where he
 doth immoveably abide, in exclusion to all other

¹ Secundum majestatem suam, secundum providentiam, secun-
 dum ineffabilem et invisibilem gratiam impletur quod ab eo dictum
 est, Ecce ego vobiscum—secundum carnem vero—non semper
 habebitis me vobiscum. Aug. in Joh. Tract. 50.

places. These things (beside many other strong SERM. reasons) if we do consider, it will suffice to guard us from those rampant absurdities, which so long, with such impudence and such violence, have out-braved plain reason and sense. But to leave this, and to come to more practical applications.

2. Is Christ ascended and advanced to this glorious eminency at God's right hand? Then let us answerably behave ourselves toward him, rendering him the honour and worship, the fear and reverence, the service and obedience suitable and due to that his state. In regard hereto all the *angels of God* are Heb. i. 6. commanded to *adore him*; and they willingly submit thereto, acknowledging him to deserve the highest worship; *Every creature* (it is in the Revelation) Rev. v. 12, in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, doth in ^{13.} its way send up acclamations of blessing and praise unto him. And shall we then refuse or neglect to do the like? we, who of all creatures in equity and gratitude are most obliged, who in reason and interest are most concerned to honour him, as ourselves receiving most honour and advantage from his exaltation? Shall we be backward in yielding obedience to him, who is in nature so nearly related to us, and in affection so well disposed toward us; who, out of tender good-will toward us, hath undertaken this high charge, and exerciseth it with design to do us good; who therefore especially is pleased to sit at the helm, that he may protect us from all the enemies of our welfare, and that he may settle us in the enjoyment of happiness? Shall we dare to oppose his will, and not dread to displease him, to whom all Matt. power in heaven and earth is given; whose will is xxviii. 18. executed by the irresistible right hand of God; who

SERM. therefore can easily check us in our bad courses, and
XXXI. will surely chastise us for our disobedience? We do plainly hereby incur the heinous guilt, and shall surely undergo the grievous punishment, of rebellion; this being the sentence which, refusing subjection to him, we shall one day hear and feel; *Those mine enemies, that would not have me reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.*

Luke xix.
27.

3. These points do afford ground and matter of great joy and comfort to us. Have we not cause to rejoice, that our Lord hath obtained so absolute and glorious a victory over all our cruel enemies? Should we not with joyful gratulation applaud the triumphs of goodness over wickedness, of charity over malice, of mercy over wrath, of life and happiness over death and misery? Is it not matter of huge satisfaction that one of our kind and kindred, who beareth toward us the bowels of a man and the affection of a brother, who hath yielded so wonderful expressions of good-will and charity toward us, who so loved us as to lay down his life for us, is raised to such pre-ferment? Shall we not be pleased, that we have so good a friend in so high place and so great power; or that he who is so willing, is also so able to do us good? Have we not great cause to acquiesce in our subjection to so just, so mild, so gracious a Governor; *the sceptre of whose kingdom is a right sceptre, whose yoke is easy, and burden light?* Shall we not be glad, considering that we have so merciful and so kind an intercessor always resident with God, always ready to do good offices for us at the throne of grace? Considering this, what is there that can be or happen in the world that should displease, discourage, or disturb us? What enemies should we fear, since all

our enemies lie prostrate under his feet? What good can we fear to want, since all things are at his disposal, and all good is dispensed by him? What events should trouble us, since all things are managed and ordered by his good hand? Will he suffer any thing to hurt us? Will he see us need any convenience? Will he let us be oppressed by any mischief or distress, whose office it is and continual care to protect and succour us? Have we not, in contemplation of these things, abundant reason to comply with that precept, of *rejoicing in the Lord always?* Be our case in this world what it will, considering where our Lord is, we have great cause to be cheerful, according to that injunction of our Lord, enforced by this consideration; *In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

SERM.
XXXI.

Phil. iv. 4.
iii. 1.

John xvi.

³³.

4. The consideration of these things serveth to cherish and strengthen all kind of faith and hope in us. If the resurrection of our Saviour might beget in us a strong persuasion concerning the truth of our Lord's doctrine, and a *lively hope* of salvation from his undertakings and performances for us, his ascension and session in glory (confirmed by the same indubitable testimonies and authorities) must needs nourish, improve, and corroborate them. We cannot surely distrust the accomplishment of any promises declared by him, we cannot despair of receiving any good from him, who is ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of divine wisdom and divine power, thence viewing all things done here, thence ordering all things every where for the advantage of those who love him and trust in him.

SERM. It especially doth serve to quicken in us that
XXXI. *blessed hope*, as St. Paul calleth it, of a joyful and
 Tit. ii. 13. happy rest after the troubles and sorrows of this
 Heb. vi. 19. wretched life; *which hope we have as an anchor of
 the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enter-
 eth into that within the veil; where the forerunner
 is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest
 for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*

5. These points do likewise serve to excite and encourage our devotion: for having such a mediator in heaven, so near God's presence, so much in God's favour; having so good and sure a friend at court, having such a *Master of requests* ever ready to present up, to recommend, and to further our petitions, what should deter, what should anywise withhold us from cheerfully, upon all occasions, by him addressing ourselves to God? We may therefore, as
 Heb. iv. 16. we are exhorted by the apostle, *come to the throne
 of grace with boldness, that we may receive mercy,
 and find grace for seasonable aid.* We cannot, considering this, anywise doubt of those promises being effectually made good to us; *Whatever ye
 shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive;
 whatsoever ye ask in my name, that will I do.*
 Matt. xxi.
 22. vii. 8.
 Mark xi. 24.
 1 John v. 14.
 John xiv.
 13. xv. 7.
 xvi. 23.

There is nothing which he, enjoying such power, cannot do for us; and there is nothing which he, our loving and merciful Brother, will not do, that is good for us, if we do with humble confidence apply ourselves to him for it. And what greater incitement can there be to devotion, than an assurance so firmly grounded of fair acceptance and happy success thereof? Yea, what an extreme folly, what a huge crime is it, not to make use of such an advantage, not by so

obliging an inducement to be moved to a constant SERM.
practice of this so beneficial and sweet kind of duties? XXXI.

6. It may encourage us to all kind of obedience, to consider what a high pitch of eternal glory and dignity our Lord hath obtained, in regard to his obedience, and as a pledge of like recompense designed to us, if we tread in his footsteps, *running the race that is set before us, and looking up unto Jesus, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, and is set at the right hand of the throne of God.* As God, in respect to what he should perform, did offer to him so high a promotion; so doth he likewise, upon condition of our obedience to his commandments, oblige himself to put us into a like excellent and happy state: so our Lord himself declared, when he said, *I covenant to you a kingdom, as my Father covenanted to me a kingdom:* ^{Luke xxii. 29.} it goeth before, *Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations:* there is the condition, faithful and constant adherence to Christ in doing and suffering; upon performance of which condition our Lord tendereth that glorious reward of an eternal kingdom: and the divine covenant being thus effectually fulfilled unto him, doth ascertain us, that his overture will likewise be made good to us; *It is,* saith St. Paul, *a faithful saying,* (that is, a word upon which we may confidently rely,) *if we be dead with him,* (dead to sin and vanity,) *we shall also live with him,* (live with him in glory and joy;) *if we endure,* (or persevere in obedience and patience after him,) *we shall also reign with him:* and, *To him* (saith our Lord in the Revelation) *that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne,* ^{Rev. i. 6. v. 10.} ^{2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.} ^{Rev. iii. 21.}

SERM. even as I also overcame, and am set down with my
 XXXI. Father on his throne.

7. Lastly, the consideration of these points should elevate our thoughts and affections from these inferior things here (the vain and base things of this world) unto heavenly things; according to that of Col. iii. 1. St. Paul; *If ye be risen with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God.* To the head of our body we should be joined; continually deriving sense and motion, direction and activity from him: where the master of our family is, there should our minds be, constantly attentive to his pleasure, and ready to serve him; where the city is, whose denizens we are, and where our final rest must be, there should our thoughts be, careful to observe the laws and orders, Heb. xi. 16. that we may enjoy the immunities and privileges thereof; in that country, where only we have any good estate, or valuable concernment, there our mind should be, studying to secure and improve our interest therein: our resolution should be conformable to Ps. cxxi. 1. that of the holy Psalmist; *I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help.* Christ Gal. ii. 20. 1 Tim. i. 1. Col. i. 27. *is our life*, saith St. Paul; and shall our souls be parted from our life? *Christ*, saith he again, *is our hope*; and shall our mind and hope be asunder? Christ is the principal object of our love, of our trust, of our joy, of all our best affections; and shall our affections be severed from their best objects? By his being in heaven all our treasure becometh there; *and where our treasure is, there* (if we apprehend and believe rightly, there naturally) *our hearts will be also*: if they be not, it is a sign we

*Animus
est, ubi
amat.*

Take him not for our best treasure. *We do in our bodies sojourn from the Lord,* as St. Paul saith; SERM. XXXI.
2 Cor. v. 6.
But in our spirits we may and should be ever present, ever conversant with him; contemplating him with an eye of faith, fastening our love upon him, reposing our confidence in him, directing our prayers and thanksgivings to him; meditating upon his good laws, his gracious promises, his holy life, and his merciful performances for us. We should not, by fixing our hearts and desires upon earthly things, (upon the vain delights, the sordid interests, the fallacious and empty glories, the sinful enjoyments here,) nor by a dull and careless neglect of heavenly things, avert, estrange, or separate ourselves wholly from him. No, *sursum corda*, let us, unloosing our hearts from these things, and with them soaring upward, follow and adhere to our Lord; so shall we anticipate that blessed future state, so shall we assure to ourselves the possession of heaven, so here enjoying our Lord in affection, we shall hereafter obtain a perfect fruition of his glorious and blissful presence; the which God of his mercy by his grace vouchsafe us, through the same our ever blessed Saviour; to whom be for ever all glory and praise. *Amen.*

O God the King of glory, who hast exalted thine own Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto thy kingdom in heaven; we beseech thee leave us not comfortless, but send thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us to the same place, whither our Saviour Christ is gone before; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

From thence He shall come to judge the Quick
and the Dead.

S E R M O N XXXII.

THE REASONABLENESS AND EQUITY OF A FUTURE JUDGMENT.

ECCLES. iii. 17.

I said in my heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked.

SERM. THESE words are the result of a serious contemplation upon the state of human affairs and common occurrences in this world: the Royal Philosopher Eccles. i. having, as he telleth us, *given his heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that were done under heaven*; what was the proper nature, what the just price of each thing; what real benefit or solid comfort each did afford; how every person did fare in the pursuit and success of his designs; did, after full examination and careful balancing all things resolve upon such conclusions as these:

Eccles. i. That no kind of undertaking here did in effect 8. ii. 11. yield any considerable profit or complete satisfaction, but all in the issue did prove vain and vexatious.

Eccles. ii. That no man from his care and industry, in any 11. ix. 11. course of life, could promise himself any certain success, xi. 6. or reap answerable reward.

That although between wisdom and folly (or between goodness and wickedness) there is some intrinsic difference of worth, (*one excelling the other, as light doth excel darkness,*) yet, as to external advantages, and as to final event here, there is no great odds discernible; for that events (prosperous and adverse) did appear to fall out, not according to the qualifications or to the practices of men, but indifferently, according to the swinge of *time and chance*; and for that death and oblivion alike do seize upon all; so that apparently, in that respect, *a man hath no preeminence over a beast.*

That in common life nothing doth appear better, than for a man, with the best advantage he can, to enjoy ordinary sensible delights and comforts, which his condition doth afford.

That in regard to the present things here, life were not desirable to any man, the inconveniences and troubles thereof outweighing its benefits; so that even the wisest, greatest, and happiest persons (such as he himself was) had cause to *hate life, and all their labour which they had taken under the sun.*

That the mind and affection of God toward men are very reserved; the course of Providence very abstruse, the reason of events unsearchable to the wit or study of men; so that we can hardly from appearances here descry any conspicuous marks of God's favour or his displeasure.

From these observations, as from so many arguments, he doth both here and otherwhere in several places of this book infer, that there shall be a divine judgment, passing upon all men, both righteous and wicked; whereby these seeming incongruities in the

SERM.
XXXII.

Eccles. ii.
13.

Eccles. ii.
15. vii. 15.
ix. 1, 11.

Eccles. ii.
16. iii. 19.

Eccles. ii.
24. iii. 12.
v. 18. viii.
15. xi. 10.

Eccles. iv.
2, 3. ii. 17.
18.

Eccles. iii.
11. viii. 17.
xi. 5.

Eccles. xi.
9. xii. 14.
v. 8. viii.
12. vii. 18.

SERM. providential administration of things shall be salved; XXXII. and in regard whereto our present opinions of things may be rectified: this he interposeth here; *I said in my heart,* (that is, by the consideration of things I was persuaded,) *that God shall judge the righteous and the wicked:* this he ever now and then toucheth, as incident to his meditations: this he in the close of all proposeth as the grand inducement to piety, and obedience to God's commandments; Eccles. xii. *For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.*

This judgment he expresseth indefinitely, so as not to determine the kind or time thereof; and as to the absolute force of his words, it may signify the decree of God, to reward or punish men here in this life, according to their deserts, the which in holy scripture is commonly styled God's judgment; but the force of his arguments (or at least of some of them) plainly doth infer a future judgment after death; and so therefore I shall take his sense to be, grounding thereon this observation; That from a wise consideration of human affairs, and obvious events here, we may collect the reasonableness, the equity, the expediency, the moral or prudential necessity of a future judgment, according to which men shall receive due recompenses, answerable to their demeanour in this life: this observation it shall be my endeavour by God's help to declare, and prove by arguments deduced from the reason and nature of things.

First then, I say, it is reasonable and equal, that there should be a future judgment: this will appear upon many accounts.

1. Seeing all men come hither without any knowledge or choice, having their life, as it were, obtruded on them ; and seeing ordinarily (according to the general complaints of men) the pains of this life do overbalance its pleasures ; so that it seemeth, in regard to what men find here, a punishment to be born^a; it seemeth also thence equal, that men should be put into a capacity, upon their good behaviour in this troublesome state, of a better state hereafter, in compensation for what they endure ^{Eccles. iv. 3, 4. ii. 17. Job iii. 3. xv. 10. Jer. xx. 14. &c.} here ; otherwise God might seem not to have dealt fairly with his creatures ; and we might have some colour to expostulate with Job ; *Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life to the bitter in soul ? Why died I not from the womb ? why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly ?*

2. Seeing man is endued with a free choice and power over his actions, and thence by a good or bad use thereof is capable of deserving well or ill, it is just that a respective difference be made, according to due estimation ; and that men answerably should be proceeded with either here or hereafter, reaping the fruits of what they voluntarily did sow. There is a natural relation between merits and rewards, ^{Job iv. 8. Prov. xxii. Jer. xxxii. 19.} which must come under taxation, and find effect, otherwise there would be no such thing as justice and injustice in the world.

3. Seeing there is a natural subordination of man to God, as of a creature to his maker, as of a subject

^a *Vitam non mehercule quisquam accepisset, nisi daretur insciis.* *Sen. ad Marc. 22.*

Nemini contigit impune nasci. *Ibid. 15.*

SERM. or servant to his lord, as of a client or dependent to
XXXII. his patron, protector, and benefactor, whence correspondent obligations do result; it is just that men should be accountable for the performance, and for the violation or neglect of them; so as accordingly either to receive approbation, or to be obliged to render satisfaction; respectively, as they have done right, and paid respect to God, or as they have offered to wrong and dishonour him; otherwise those relations would seem vain and idle.

4. Seeing also there are natural relations of men to one another, and frequent transactions between them, founding several duties of humanity and justice; the which may be observed or transgressed; so that some men shall do, and others suffer much injury, without any possible redress from otherwhere, it is fit that a reference of such cases should be made to the common Patron of right, and that by him they should be so decided, that due amends should be made to one party, and fit correction inflicted on

^{2 Thess. i.} _{6, 7.} the other; according to that of St. Paul; *It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, in the revelation of our Lord Jesus.*

5. Whereas also there are many secret good actions, many inward good dispositions, good wishes, and good purposes, unto which here no honour, no profit, no pleasure, no sort of benefit is annexed, or indeed well can be, (they being indiscernible to men;) there are likewise many bad practices and designs concealed, or disguised, so as necessarily to pass away without any check, any disgrace, any damage or chastisement here; it is most equal that

hereafter both these kinds should be disclosed, and **SERM.
XXXII.**
obtain answerable recompense.

6. There are also persons whom, although committing grievous wrong, oppression, and other heinous misdemeanours, offensive to God and man, yet, by reason of the inviolable sacredness of their authority, or because of their uncontrollable power, no justice here can reach, nor punishment can touch ; who therefore should be reserved to the impartial and irresistible judgment of God ; and fit it is, that (for satisfaction of justice, and distinction of such, from those who contrariwise behave themselves well) a Tophet should be prepared for them.

Isa. xxxi.
33.

7. Upon these and the like accounts, equity requireth that a judgment should pass upon the deeds of men ; and thereto the common opinions of men and the private dictates of each man's conscience do attest : for all men seeing any person to demean himself brutishly and unworthily, committing heinous disorders and outrages, are apt to pronounce it unfit that such an one should escape with impunity ; likewise when innocent and good persons (who do no harm, and do what good they can) do suffer, or do enjoy no benefit thence, it is a pity, will any indifferent person be ready to say, that such a man's case should not be considered ; that some reparation or some reward should not be allotted to him : the which apprehensions of men are in effect the verdicts of common sense concerning the equity of a judgment to be.

8. Every man also having committed any notable misdemeanour, (repugnant to piety, justice, or sobriety,) doth naturally accuse himself for it, doth in his heart sentence himself to deserve punishment,

SERM. and doth stand possessed with a dread thereof; so,
XXXII. even unwillingly, avouching the equity of a judgment, and by a forcible instinct presaging it to come. As likewise he that hath performed any virtuous or honest action, doth not only rest satisfied therein, but hath raised in him a strong hope of benefit to come from heaven in recompense thereof; the which apprehensions and hopes do involve an opinion, that it is reasonable a judgment should be. All which considerations (seeing it is manifest that there is not generally or frequently any such exact judgment or dispensation of rewards in this life, nor perhaps, without changing the whole frame of things and course of Providence, can well be) do therefore infer the fitness and equity of a future judgment.

It is further, upon divers accounts, requisite and needful, that men should have an apprehension concerning such a judgment appointed by God, and consequently that such an one should really be. It is requisite toward the good conduct of human affairs here, or to engage men to the practice of virtue; it is necessary to the maintaining any belief concerning religion, or sense of piety: without it therefore no convenient society among men can be well upheld.

1. It is, I say, needful to engage men upon the practice of any virtue, and to restrain them from any vice; for that indeed without it, no consideration of reason, no provision of law here, can be much available to those purposes. He that will consider the nature of men, or observe their common practice, (marking what apprehensions usually steer them, what inclinations sway them, in their elections and pursuits of things,) shall, I suppose, find, that from an invincible principle of self-love, or sen-

suality, deriving itself through all their motions of SERM.
soul, and into all their actions of life, men generally XXXII.
do so strongly propend to the enjoyment of present
sensible goods, that nothing but a presumption of
some considerable benefit to be obtained by absti-
nence from them, or of some grievous mischief con-
sequent on the embracing them, can withhold them
from pursuing such enjoyment. From hence (see-
ing fancy, reason, and experience do all prompt men
to a foresight of events, and force them to some re-
gard of the consequences of things) it followeth, that
hope and fear are the main springs which set on
work all the wheels of human action ; so that any
matter being propounded, if men can hope that it
will yield pleasant or profitable (that is, tending to
pleasant) fruits, they will undertake it ; if they do
fear its consequences will be distasteful or hurtful,
they will decline it : very rare it is to find, that the
love or liking of a thing, as in itself amiable to the
mind, or suitable to reason, doth incline men thereto ;
that honest things, bare of present advantages, and
barren of hopeful fruits, are heartily pursued ; that
any thing otherwise averteth us from itself, than as
immediately presenting some mischief, or danger-
ously threatening it. When goodness therefore doth
clash with interest or pleasure, *human wisdom* (the Rom. viii.6.
φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, *natural sense of the flesh*, which
St. Paul speaketh of as opposite to virtue) will dis-
pose men to take part with these ; and, except some
higher aid come in to succour goodness, it is odds
that ever they will prevail over it. If it do appear,
that virtue can pay men well for their pains, they
perhaps may be her servants ; but they will hardly
wait on her in pure courtesy, or work in her service

SERM. for nothing ; if she bringeth visibly a good dowry
XXXII. with her, she may be courted ; but her mere beauty,
or worth, will draw few suitors to her : who will
forego sensible pleasures, or wave substantial profit ;
who will reject the overtures of power, or honour, for
her sake ? And if vice, how ill soever it look or leav,
do offer fairly, how many persons will be so nice or
squeamish, as merely out of fancy, or in despite to
her, to refuse or renounce her ? In short, as men
are baited with pleasure or bribed with profit, so
they pursue, as they are stung with pain or curbed
with fear, so they eschew things ; it is a gift (or a
specious appearance of some good offered) which
perpetually moveth the greatest part, which often
blindeth the eyes and perverteth the heart of the
Deut. xvi. 19.
Exod. xxiii. wisest sort of men.

8.

It is further to common sense very obvious, that
this life cannot promise or afford to virtue any re-
wards apparently so considerable, as in the common
judgment of men to overpoise the pains and difficul-
ties required to the procurement and maintenance
thereof, (the pains and difficulties to be overgone
in mastering stubborn inclinations, in moderating
greedy appetites, in restraining violent passions, in
encountering frequent and strong temptations, in
abstracting our minds and affections from sensible
things, in assiduous watching over our thoughts,
words, and actions,) together with the manifold in-
conveniences, crosses, and troubles, which do attend
the strict practice of virtue ; that likewise here there
are not ordinarily any such discouragements affixed
to vice, which do much weigh down the pleasures
with which it is tempered, and the advantages wait-
ing on it.

As for human laws, made to encourage and re- SERM.
quite virtue, or to check and chastise vice, it is also XXXII.
manifest that they do extend to cases in comparison
very few ; and that even as to particulars which
they touch, they are so easily eluded, or evaded, that
without intrenching upon them, at least without in-
curring their edge, or coming within the verge of their
correction, men may be very bad in themselves, ex-
tremely injurious to their neighbours, and hugely
troublesome to the world ; so that such laws hardly
can make tolerable citizens, much less thoroughly
good men, even in exterior demeanour and dealing.
However, no laws of men can touch internal acts of
virtue or vice ; they may sometimes bind our hands,
or bridle our mouths, or shackle our feet ; but they
cannot stop our thoughts, they cannot still our pas-
sions, they cannot bend or break our inclinations :
these things are beyond the reach of their cognizance,
of their command, of their compulsion, or their cor-
rection : they cannot therefore render men truly
good, or hinder them from being bad.

Upon which and the like considerations it is plain
enough, that, setting aside the persuasion of a future
judgment, all other incentives to virtue and restraints
from vice, which either common experience suggest-
eth, or philosophical speculation may devise, are very
weak and faint, and cannot reasonably promise con-
siderable effect : the native beauty and intrinsic
worth of virtue, or its suitableness to reason and the
dignity of our nature ; the grace and commendation
with which it decketh the practisers of it ; its good-
ly, pleasant, and wholesome fruits of manifold con-
veniences, of health to soul and body, of peace and
amity among men, of tranquillity and satisfaction in

SERM. mind, if they do not reach beyond this transitory life, cannot to the common apprehensions of men appear so considerable, or prove so efficacious, as to engage men closely and constantly to adhere thereto. Neither will the worst of evils innate or accessory to vice, (its essential deformity and turpitude, or its being disagreeable to reason and dishonourable to human nature, together with the distempers, the damages, the disgraces, the disturbances apt to sprout from it,) if no more hereafter is to be feared in consequence thereof, be sufficient to deter or discourage men from it: the peril of death itself (the worst evil which men pretend to inflict, and that which our nature seemeth most to abhor) will not import much toward the diverting indigent, ambitious, or passionate men from the most desperately wicked attempts: it is the observation of Cicero, from which he inferreth the need of supposing future punishments, as the only effectual restraints from such actions; *That, saith he, there might be in this life some fear laid upon wicked men, those ancients did think good, that there should be some punishments appointed in hell for impious persons; because indeed they understood, that, setting these apart, death itself was not to be feared*^b.

Cic. de Fin. iii. Tusc. 5. There have been indeed vented such fine and stately notions as these: that reason simply, however attended, doth challenge obedience to itself;

Cic. de Leg. Sen. de I. that virtue is abundantly its own reward, and vice a complete punishment to itself; that we should not Clem. i. 1.

^b Ut aliqua in vita formido improbis esset, apud inferos ejusmodi quædam illi antiqui supplicia impiis constituta esse voluntur, quod videlicet intelligebant his remotis non esse mortem ipsam pertimesceudam. Cic. Catil. 4.

in our practice be mercenary, regarding what profit or detriment will accrue from it, but should be good absolutely and gratis; that moral goods are the only desirable goods, and moral evils the only evils to be grieved at; that nothing can happen amiss to good men, and whatever their condition is, they are perfectly happy; that nothing can truly benefit ill men, or exempt them from misery: ^{SERM.} ^{XXXII.} but these and the like notions, frequently occurring in philosophers, as they are, (being rightly understood, or taken in a qualified sense,) supposing religion and a future judgment, evidently reasonable and true; (as also perhaps, even abstracting from that supposition, they may have in them a kind of slim and dusky truth, discernible to one in a thousand, who is very sharp-sighted, and looketh most wistly on them; as they may be relished by a few persons of very refined spirit, or of special improvement;) so to the common herd of people, (unto whose inclinations and capacities it is fit that the general rules of practice, and the most effectual inducements thereto, should be squared,) to men immersed in the cares, the toils, and the temptations of the world, they plainly are unsuitable; their grosser conceit cannot apprehend, their more rugged disposition will not admit such fine notions; they in effect, by the generality of men, have been slighted and exploded, as incongruous to common sense and experience, as the dictates of affectation or simplicity; as the dreams of idle persons, addicted to speculation, and regardless of the

^c Neque bona, neque mala quæ vulgus putet; multos qui conflictari adversis videantur beatos, ac plerosque quanquam magnas per opes miserrimos, si illi gravem fortunam constanter tolerent, hi prospera inconsulte utantur. *Tuc. Ann. 6.*

SER.M. world, such as it really doth exist, and will ever persist, while men continue endued with the same natural inclinations and affections : so that from such notions little succour can be expected toward promoting virtue, or restraining vice in the world.

Upon these considerations the necessity or great usefulness of supposing a judgment doth appear; that it being cast into the scales may, to the common understanding of men, evidently render virtue more considerable and eligible than vice; as even in consequential profit and pleasure far surpassing it.

2. Whence manifestly the same supposition is also needful for the welfare of human society ; the which, without the practice of justice, fidelity, and other virtues, can hardly subsist^d; without which practice indeed, a body of men would be worse than a company of wolves or foxes ; and vain it were to think, that it can any where stand without conscience; and conscience, without fear checking, or hope spurring it on, can be no more than a name : all societies therefore, we may see, have been fain to call in the notion of a future judgment to the aid of justice, and support of fidelity ; obliging men to bind their testimonies by oaths, and plight their troth by sacraments ; implying a dread of that divine judgment to which they solemnly do then appeal and make themselves accountable.

3. But further, the persuasion concerning a future judgment is, upon peculiar accounts, most requisite to the support of religion and defence of piety.

It is certain, that no authority, upon whatever

^d Deos agere curam rerum humanarum, ex usu vitæ est ; pœnasque maleficii, aliquando seras, nunquam autem irritas esse, &c.
Plin. xi. 7.

reason or equity grounded, if it do not present competent encouragements to obedient subjects, if it do not hold forth an armed hand, menacing chastisement to the refractory, will signify any thing, or be able to sustain the respect due to it; that no laws, however in themselves equal or commodious, if a certain account or trial, backed with a dispensation of valuable rewards, and infliction of formidable punishments, be not annexed to them, will obtain any force, so as to be observed or regarded; that no obligation whatever, of duty or gratitude, will prevail upon men, if they do not apprehend, themselves under a constraint to render an account, so as to be forced either to do reason, or to suffer for not doing it: so it is generally; and so it is even in regard to God, the sovereign King and Governor of the world, as piety doth suppose him: his authority will never be maintained, his laws will never be obeyed, the duties towards him will never be minded, without influence upon the hopes and fears of men; they will not yield to him any reverence, they will nowise regard his commands, if they may not from their respect and obedience expect good benefit, if they dread not a sore vengeance for their rebellion or neglect; nothing to them will seem more fond, than to serve him, who doth not well requite for the performance, than to revere him, who doth not soundly punish for the neglect of his service.

Forasmuch also as piety doth require duties somewhat high and hard, as much crossing the natural inclinations and desires of men, it peculiarly, for the overruling such aversion, doth need answerably great encouragements to the practice, and determents from the transgression of what it requireth; upon which

SERM. score it may also further appear, that temporal judgments, and recompenses here, are not sufficient to procure a due obedience to the laws of piety; for how indeed can he, that for the sake of piety doth undergo disgrace, loss, or pain, expect to be satisfied here? What other benefits can he presume upon beside those which he doth presently forfeit?

Of this particular God may seem designedly to have set before us a pregnant instance or experiment worthy our consideration: God in a very notorious and affecting manner declared his will and law to the Jews; and, to engage them to obedience, he not only recommended it to them as very good in itself, and very convenient for them to observe; but he enforced it with promises of the greatest blessings concerning this life, that men are capable of, if they should obey; and with curses or menaces of the most dismal mischiefs imaginable in reference to this life, in case of disobedience; and that he both could and would in both respects make his word good, he did by miraculous dispensation of signal mercies and judgments most evidently shew and assure them: yet what was the effect? it was, that, as the Psalm-

Ps. cxi. 24.
25. lxxviii.
37, 56. *ist expresseth it, They despised the pleasant land—
and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord:
their heart was not right with God, neither were
they steadfast in his covenant: they tempted and
provoked the most high God, and kept not his tes-
timonies: they did not so value those benefits, they
could not so dread those penalties, as in regard to
them to persist for any time in a steady obedience;
as not easily in despite of them to be drawn into the
worst of crimes prohibited to them: the sweetest
enjoyment of those good things could not hold*

them close to their duty, nor was the saddest smart SERM. of those evils able to reclaim them from sin; but even that very people (we may further observe) having afterward (by sparks of light darted from the prophets, or otherwise) obtained some clearer notions and stronger persuasions concerning a future state, and rewards dispensed therein of higher consideration than any temporal ones here, became thereupon very constant and resolute in observance of their law; they proved valiant and fierce in defence thereof; they chose rather to endure the most grievous afflictions, than to transgress it; as the history of the Maccabees doth inform us: they, ^{2 Mac. vi.} ^{26. viii. 23.} as the Apostle to the Hebrews remarked of them, ^{29.} *waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight* ^{Heb. xi. 34.} *the armies of the aliens: they also were tortured,* ^{35.} *not accepting a deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:* this hope it was, which then did raise them to so vigorous resolution, and so cheerful patience: from the same apostle we also learn, that it was a sense of our being here in a transitory state, and *having an eye to the recom-* ^{Heb. xi. 26.} *pense of reward* after this life, which did engage the good patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament so readily upon all occasions to comply with God's will, and to perform the most difficult commands by him imposed on them: these things they did, *not*, saith the apostle, *having indeed received* ^{Heb. xi. 13.} *the promises,* (that is, not having the evangelical promises concerning a future life in so formal and express a manner, as we now have, proposed to them,) *but yet having seen them afar off, and having been persuaded of them, and having embraced them, and having* (in declaration of those percep-

SERM. tions and persuasions) confessed that they were
XXXII. *strangers and pilgrims upon earth.*

The like observation might be made even concerning the pagans, who, while the persuasions concerning judgments and rewards after this life were retained in common vogue, did live more innocently and virtuously; but after those generally were discarded, so that the satirist could say, that *scarce boys did believe any ghosts, or subterraneous judicatures*^c, then did all wickedness mainly prevail and overflow. Comparing which things we may discern, as the weakness of considerations merely regarding this present life, so the force of those which concern a future state, in order to the procuring obedience to God's law; supposing both entertained with the same faith or persuasion of mind: from whence the necessity of that judgment, which we speak of, toward the maintenance of piety doth appear.

But beyond these things this point is very needful, to secure the very foundations of all religion and piety, the existence of God, and his providence over human affairs: the belief of a Deity, according to any tolerable notion thereof, and of a providence over us, apt to engage or encourage us to religious performances, without supposition of a judgment, and of a dispensation according to it of future rewards, cannot be well maintained; the objections assailing them would strike too hard, and pierce too deep, were we not furnished with this good shield to receive and repel them.

Eccles. ix. To find that of the Preacher certified by experience; *No man knoweth either love or hatred by*

^c *Esse aliquos manes, et subterranea regna —*
Vix pueri credunt. *Juv. Sat. ii.*

all that is before him. All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that sweareth not.

SERM.
XXXII.

To behold virtue grovelling on the ground, and trampled on; while vice is mounted on the perch,^{Eccles. x. 4.} and sitteth proudly domineering; to view innocence and right sadly groaning under oppression, while fraud and violence do triumph and insult; which sights are obvious in the world; as the Preacher observed; *I saw, said he, under the sun, the place Eccles. iii. of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the 16. place of righteousness, that iniquity was there: I Eccles. iv. 1. considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and behold the tears of such as were oppressed; on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter:* so did Job also take notice, when he said, *The tabernacles of the Job xii. 7. robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure:* and the Psalmist complained of wicked oppressors; *They are enclosed in their own fat, and Ps. xvii. 10. with their mouth they speak proudly:* and the prophet Malachi; *Now we call the proud happy; Mal. iii. 15. yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are delivered.*

To observe it frequently to happen, that most innocent and virtuous persons do conflict all their days with hardships and crosses, and sometime after all

' Sed cum res hominum tanta caligine volvi
Adspicerem, lætosque diu florere nocentes,
Versarique pios, rursus labefacta cadebat
Religio, &c. Claud. in Ruff. 1. init.

SERM. die sadly in pain, and under ignominy; while persons most outrageous in lewdness and iniquity do flourish and rant it out in a long undisturbed course of prosperity, and in the end depart hence fairly and
XXXII. Eccles. vii. quietly; according to that in Ecclesiastes; *There is 15. a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in wickedness:* the former was the case of Socrates, of Phocion, of Regulus, of many other remarkably gallant and worthy persons; the latter, as Cicero observed, of Dionysius, who, after thirty years of unjust and cruel domination, in much splendour, died quietly in his bed^s.

Thus, I say, to see and consider, that commonly Eccles. viii. *to just men it happeneth according to the work of 14. the wicked, and to wicked men according to the work of the righteous,* as the Preacher speaketh, that here piety with its best friends do suffer deeply, and impiety with its worst abettors do notably thrive; yea, that not only good men suffer, but often suffer for being good, (from envy and malignity of men that hate goodness,) and that bad men not only prosper, but prosper by their wickedness, (by their fraud and violence,) hath been a huge scandal to religion, which hath caused many to stumble, hath cast some quite down into the gulf of atheism or epicurism^h;

^s Dies deficiat si velim numerare, quibus bonis male evenerit, nec minus si commemoarem, quibus improbis optime. *Cic. de Nat. Deor. 3.*

Dionysius 30 annos tyrannus fuit opulentissimæ et beatissimæ civitatis—atque in suo lectulo mortuus. *Cic. ib.*

^h Improborum prosperitates, secundæque res redarguunt (ut Diogenes dicebat) vim omnem Deorum et potestatem. *Cic. de Nat. Deor.*

hath brought soine men to doubt, hath induced others S E R M. flatly to deny, that there is a God, (that is, a most XXXII. wise, powerful, just, and good Being, every where present,) or that he being, doth preside over, or any-
 wise concern himself in our affairs : from this source did flow all those impious conceits, which Seneca thus expresseth ; *One objecteth to the gods neglect of us ; another, iniquity ; another casts them out beyond his world, and leaves them forlorn, as lazy and dull, without any light, or any workⁱ.* From hence it hath been, that in all places and times there have been persons ready to say with those in the Psalms, *How doth God know ? is there knowledge in the Most High ? The Lord doth not see,* ^{Psal. lxxiii. 11. xciv. 7.} *neither doth the God of Jacob regard it : God hath forgotten ; he hideth his face, and will never see it.*

^k And not only upon blind pagans and profane persons, but even upon the most pious of God's people these considerations have made impression, extorting from their hearts and mouths expostulations like that of Jeremiah ; *Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper ? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously ?* and that of Job, *Wherefore doth the wicked live, become old, and are mighty in power ? their seed is established in* ^{Jer. xii. 1. Job. xxi. 7.}

* Η χρή μηκέθ' ἡγεῖσθαι θεοὺς, εἰ ταῦδες ἔσται τῆς δίκης ὑπέρερπα.
Eurip. Elect.

ⁱ Alius illis objicit negligentiam nostri, alias iniquitatem ; alias illos extra mundum suum projicit, et ignavos hebetesque illos sine luce, sine ullo opere destituit. *Sen. de Benef. vii. 31.*

^k Quippe sapientissimos veterum, quique sectam eorum æmulantur, diversos repieres ; ac multis insitam opinionem non initia nostri, non finem, non denique homines Diis curæ ; ideo creberrima et tristia in bonos, læta apud deteriores esse. *Tac. An. 6.*

SERM. *their sight, their houses are safe from fear, neither*
XXXII. *is the rod of God upon them—they spend their*
days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the
Job x. 3. *grave : and that, Is it good unto thee that thou*
shouldest oppress, that thou shouldst despise the
work of thine hand, and shine upon the counsel
of the wicked ? Such questions did this kind of ob-
servations draw forth, and it shrewdly tempted them
to a dissatisfaction in their pious practice, that they
Psal. lxxiii. *were ready to say with the Psalmist, Verily I have*
13. *cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands*
Mal. iii. 14. *in innocence ; or with those in the prophet ; It is*
vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we
have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked
Ps. lxxiii. 2. *mournfully before the Lord ? so that hence, their*
feet were almost gone, and their steps had well
nigh slipped into a distrust of God's wise and just
providence ; they were moved to suspect that God
did not indeed bear that special regard to goodness,
and affection to good men, that great hatred of ini-
quity, and displeasure toward the lovers of it, which
religion supposeth, as the main grounds of piety :
thus, I say, have men, both good and bad, upon such
occasions been induced or tempted to doubt concern-
ing those fundamental points ; and that not without
apparently weighty cause, admitting that all accounts
are made up here in this life between God and men ;
or that there is no reckoning behind, to be adjusted
in another world by divine justice and goodness ;
then indeed that saying, it is a reproach to the
Deity that bad men do prosper¹, and good men suf-
fer, hath a plausible semblance of truth ; then he
that affirmed, there was no God, and heaven to be

¹ Θεῖν ὄντας τοὺς κακοὺς εἰδαιμονεῖν.

*a void place, proving his assertion hence, that while SERM.
he thus affirmed, he found himself in a good case^m, XXXII.*
 did argue smartly ; then Diagoras from an unpunished perjury collected probably, that God did not exist, or did not mind what was done here ; for that being, and regarding things, he would not have endured himself to be so affronted, and those under his care so abusedⁿ; then had Dionysius some reason to justify his sacrilege by his prosperous navigation from committing it ; and with fair colour Diogenes might say, that Harpalus's successful treachery and rapine did *testimonium dicere adversos deos, bear testimony against the gods*, as guilty of injustice or carelessness : these sort of discourses would, I say, upon excluding the supposition of future judgment, have some validity, or speciousness : and for want of that supposition we may observe the apologies for Providence, elaborately composed by some philosophers, to be very lame and unsatisfactory. But supposing a judgment hereafter designed by God, and a proceeding with all men according thereto, all difficulty in these cases vanisheth, all objections have plainly no moment or force : then God's present connivance, or patient indulgence toward wicked men will signify no more, than what most becometh him as God and governor of the world ; his most excellent goodness and admirable clemency toward <sup>Rom. ii. 4.
ix. 22.</sup>
^{2 Pet. iii. 9, 15.} his creatures and subjects ; in *waiting to be gra-*

^m Nullos esse Deos, inane cœlum,
Affirmat Selius, probatque quod se

Factum, dum negat hæc, videt beatum. *Mart.* iv. 20.

ⁿ —— Sunt nobis nulla profecto

Numina, cum cœlo rapiantur secula casu

Mentimur regnare Jovem, &c. *Luc.* vii. 445.

SERM. *cious*, and providing for their return to a better mind;
XXXII. affording them time and means of reforming their minds and manners, that so they may escape the stroke of final vengeance: so in most cases; and in some also signifying his wise justice, in suffering bad men to proceed forward to an inexcusable pitch of guilt, in order to their more clearly just condemnation and severe punishment hereafter; that being

Rom. ix. 22. κατηρτισμένοι εἰς ἀπώλειαν, *thoroughly fit*, as St. Paul speaketh, or ripe for *perdition*; being *prepared*, as the prophet Jeremiah expresseth it, or *sanctified for the slaughter*; ^o being by their present ease and abused prosperity become fat and fair, they may fall more proper victims to divine severity.

Then also from God's permitting good men to suffer, how smartly soever, nothing can be inferred prejudicial unto divine goodness or justice; since they are thereby made fitter for, and do attain a surer title to, those excellent rewards, which he upon such trial and approbation of their virtues doth intend to confer upon them^p; especially considering that afflictions are necessary, both as means of rendering men good, and as occasions of expressing their goodness, that scarce any virtue could subsist or could appear without them^q.

Vid Chrys.
And. a. There could be no such thing as patience, if there were no adversities to be endured; no such thing as contentedness, if there were no wants to be felt; no such thing as industry, if there were no pains to

^o Ἀγνιστον αὐτοὺς εἰς ἡμέραν σφαγῆς αὐτῶν. LXX.

Ut victimæ saginantur, ut hostiæ coronantur. *Min. Fel.*

^p Justis quicquid malorum irrogatur, non est poena criminis, sed virtutis examen. *Aug.*

^q Experitur, indurat, sibi ipsum preparat. *Sen. de Prov. 1.*

be taken; no such thing as humility, if sensible infirmities and crosses did not prompt us to sober thoughts, and shew us what we are¹. There would be no true wisdom, no clear knowledge of ourselves, or right judgment of things, without experiencing the worst half of things. We should never learn to master our passions, or temper our appetites, or wrest our inclinations to a compliance with reason, if that discipline were away, which the holy Psalmist intimateth, saying, *It is good for me* Psal. cxix.
67, 71, 75. *that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.* How much we do love God, how submissive we are to God's will, how little we do value these mean things here, we cannot otherwise than by willingly undergoing or patiently bearing afflictions, well express; without it no sure trial of virtue can be, without it no excellent example of goodness had ever been. As therefore it is necessary that good men, even that they may be good, should suffer here; so it is, supposing a future judgment, very just that they should do so, that they may acquire a title to the rewards following it; rewards far out-
Magnum
exemplum
nisi mala
fortuna non
invenit.
Sen. de
Prov. 3.
2Cor. iv. 17.
Rom. viii.
18.
Matt. v. 12.

In reference therefore to the present impunity of bad men, and letting iniquity to prevail or to proceed here, that which cured David, Job, and Solomon, may satisfy us; *going into the sanctuary, and understanding the end of those men*; considering,
Psal. lxxiii.
17.
that the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction, and shall be brought out to the day of wrath; Job xxi. 30.
that after all their jollity and pleasure, God for all Rom. ii. 5.
Eccles. xi. 9.

¹ Semper esse felicem, et sine morsu animi transire vitam, ignorare est rerum naturae alteram partem. *Sen. de Prov. 4.*

SERM. *these things will bring them into judgment.* In re-

XXXII. gard to the righteous being afflicted here, that of

²Thess. i. 5. St. Paul may suffice, saying of them, *It is a man-*

fest instance of God's righteous judgment, that they may be made worthy of the kingdom of God,

²Luke vi. 21. *for which they suffer:* that of our Saviour,; *Blessed*

^{23.} *are ye, when men shall hate you, and shall reproach you; rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy; for, behold, your reward is great in heaven:*

^{12.} Eccles. viii. that of Solomon; *Though a sinner do evil a hun-*

^{12.} Isa. iii. 10. *dred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely*

^{11.} *I know that it shall be well with them that fear God.* In respect to both sorts of men, that of St.

²Pet. ii. 29. Peter will resolve all doubt; *God knoweth how to deliver the godly out of trials, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.* All scores will be fully quitted by the execution of

^{46.} Matt. xxv. that sentence pronounced by our Judge himself, *The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.*

This hypothesis doth indeed even to our common sense throughly solve most of those appearances in the course of things here, which otherwise might seem intricate or strange; clearing Providence from all misprisions, and satisfying our minds, so far as is needful, concerning the reasons of most occurrences here. From it we may learn,

That God in this great drama, made up of his providence and our free-will concurrently or interchangeably acting, doth mean, in order to this catastrophe or judgment in the last and chief act, to let men go on playing their parts undisturbedly, according to their inclinations and humours, yet within certain limits, and under the check of his hand,

in proper seasons, to prevent confusion of all interposing itself*. SERM.
XXXII.

That it is not, therefore, fit now by open significations, either of approbation or dislike, often to interrupt the process of human actions ; especially considering that the final doom concerning persons is not to be grounded upon single passages, or the particular acts of one time, but upon the whole body of action passing through the course of each man's part, in the place and time allotted to him ; and that he who now acteth laudably may, before all is done, come to faulter ; he that now behaveth himself untowardly may afterward learn to do better, and in the end come off well.

That hence it is not to be wondered, that God Eccles. iii. 11. viii. 17. here should be somewhat reserved in dispensing xi. 5. testimonies of favour to those who at present do seem good, somewhat sparing in declaring wrath toward those who now appear bad ; that he should not miraculously pour down golden showers on the heads of the righteous, nor send *fire from heaven*, as angry Luke ix. 55. man would have him, upon every provocation, to consume sinners.

That this life is not a time of reaping, but of sowing ; not of approbation, but of trial ; not of triumph, but of combat : this world is not a place of enjoyment, but of work ; our condition here is not a state of settlement, but of travel ; whence no man should expect more of encouragement, than is needful to support him in this work and way ; should look to receive wages before his task is done ; to get the prize, before he hath gone through the race ; to

* Διὰ τοῦτο οὖτε κρίσις, ἵνα κοινῇ πάντες στεφανωθῶμεν, ἵνα ἀπὸ τούτης τελλὰ μεταβληθῶμεν εἰς δρεπήν. Chrys. in Matt. Or. 11.

S E R M. gather the spoils, before he hath fought out the battle ; to enjoy rest, before he is at his journey's end ; to be put in full possession of happiness, before his right and title thereto is completely assured : that no man also should presume or please himself upon present impunity for his misbehaviour or sloth, like *Eccles. viii.* those of whom the Preacher saith, *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil* ; seeing this is the season of mercy and patience, when God commonly doth not further inflict crosses on us, than may serve to mind us of our duty, or urge us to the performance of it ; and seeing the longer vengeance is withheld, the more heavy it will at last fall on us, if we despise the present season of grace, and proceed to the end in impenitence ; that present impunity, therefore, is a sore punishment, and correction here a really great favour.

That ordinarily temporal prosperity and adversity, as in comparison to things relating to our future state they are plainly inconsiderable, so they can be no arguments of God's special favour or displeasure ; whence it appeareth to be no small rashness to conclude how God stands affected to any person from what befalleth him here, (as those who inferred concerning the Galileans, *whose blood Pilate mixed with their sacrifices* ; and concerning those Jews, *upon whom the tower in Siloam did fall*, that they were more sinners than others of their nation,) yea, that if we must be interpreting God's mind from these occurrences, it is rather more reasonable to conceive that God disliketh them whom he doth not check, and approveth them whom he chastiseth ;

Luke xiii. 1, &c.

Prov. iii. 12.

Job v. 17.

whence the prosperity of bad men is rather pitiable than invidious, as that which aggravateth and strengtheneth their wickedness, which accumulateth guilt, which draweth them forward, and plungeth them deeper into perdition; that the adversity of good men is no misery, but a blessing and happiness to them, as exercising and fortifying their virtues, ensuring their state, endearing them to God. However,

That God plainly doth mean to vilify these present things, appearing to our sense good or evil, by scattering them abroad with an indifferent hand; so that his friends taste as little good and as much evil as his enemies^t.

"That there is no reason to wonder or to complain that things here do not go on in a course so smooth and straight as they should do; for that vanity and iniquity have their part and time to act upon this stage, yea are allowed sometimes a seeming reign; but justice, though at present it seemeth to sleep, or to wink at things, will at length awake, and effectually bestir itself; that right, although here it may be sometime crossed or foiled, yet it can never be quelled or overthrown; it may be suspended, but cannot be suppressed; it may be somewhat eclipsed, but it cannot be quite extinguished, yea infallibly in the end it will triumphantly prevail.

That no good design shall be undertaken, nor any honest labour can be spent in vain; seeing although they chance to find no success, or to yield no fruit

^t Nullo modo potest Deus magis concupita traducere, quam si illa in turpissimos defert, ab optimis abigit. *Sen. de Prov. 5.*

^u Dantur bonis ne putentur mala, dantur malis ne putentur summa bona. *Aug.*

SERM.
XXXII.

Heb. xii. 7.
Rev. iii. 19.

Prov. xxiii.
Luke xvi. 17.

25.

SERM. here, yet they cannot fail to obtain a happy issue
XXXII. and a plentiful reward hereafter.

That how small soever the difference doth now appear between wise men and fools, or between virtuous and vicious persons, there will be hereafter a vast discrimination made, when in consequence of that upright trial one shall enter into eternal bliss, the other shall fall into an abyss of misery.

That this life is not contemptible, nor all things here utterly vain; seeing that upon this life is founded our eternal state; seeing these occurrences have influence upon our eternal joy or woe; seeing all things here will conduce to the illustration of divine mercy or justice. That God is indeed here
 Isa. xlvi. 15. *Deus absconditus*, as the prophet styleth him, *a God that hideth himself*; advisedly suffering his goodness and justice to be under a cloud, that at length they may break out more gloriously *in that day, when*, as St. Paul saith, his δικαιοκρισία, his most Rom. ii. 5. *righteous dealing* (both in governance of all affairs now, and in deciding of all cases then) *shall be revealed*, and made conspicuous to all the world.

Thus doth it, upon many accounts, appear fit and needful, that there should be a future judgment; the apprehension thereof being the sharpest spur to virtue, the strongest curb from vice, the surest fence of human society, the safest bulwark of religion, (securing the authority of God, and guarding his providence, together with all his holy attributes, from all batteries, all sinister aspersions, all profane misconstructions;) in short, the most effectual means, if it be heartily embraced, to render men, in their minds and in their enjoyments, sober, just in their dealings toward their neighbour, and in all their life

pious toward God ; there being indeed no considera- SERM.
tion, whereof the mind of man is capable, more apt XXXII.
to beget in him a care and conscience of what he
doeth, than this ; that after a very short and trans-
itory life all his actions must undergo a strict scruti-
tiny, according to the result whereof he shall be
either approved and rewarded, or condemned and
punished : whereof any man being thoroughly per-
suaded, and anywise considering it, he cannot surely
but accuse himself of extreme folly and madness, if
he doth not provide for that account, and order all
his practice with a regard thereto. The which use
of this point God by his grace dispose us to make,
for the sake of Jesus, our blessed Redeemer, to
whom for ever be all glory and praise.

Now the very God of peace sanctify you wholly ; 1Thea.v.23.
and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and
body be preserved blameless unto the coming of
our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

From thence he shall come to judge the Quick
and the Dead.

S E R M O N X X X I I I .

THE CERTAINTY AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF A FUTURE JUDGMENT FROM DIVINE REVELATION.

Acts x. 42.

And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained by God to be Judge of quick and dead.

S E R M . X X X I I I . **T**HESSE words are part of a sermon preached by St. Peter to Cornelius and his friends, wherein the apostle briefly declareth unto them the chief particulars in the history of Christ, together with some main points of Christian doctrine most fit for them to know ; particularly he doth in these words express the point concerning the *future judgment* ; reporting that our Lord especially did charge his apostles *to preach unto the people and testify*, that is, first publicly to declare and explain, then by convenient proofs, especially by divine attestations, to evince and persuade this point ; the importance whereof, and eminence among other Christian doctrines, doth hence plainly appear, that the author of

our faith did make so especial provision, and gave SERM.
so express charge concerning the promulgation and XXXIII.
probation thereof: the which circumstance is indeed
remarkable and weighty; but I shall not insist on it,
meaning immediately to set upon considering the
point itself, as it is here laid down in these terms;
*that it is he which was ordained by God to be
Judge of quick and dead:* in which words are
couched three particulars most considerable.

1. A judgment ordained by God, and to be de-
clared to men.

2. The Judge, by whom immediately that judg-
ment is administered; *he;* Jesus, our Lord and Sa-
viour.

3. The extent of that judgment, or its adequate
object; *quick and dead.*

These particulars I shall in order touch, inserting
some material considerations about the nature and
manner of this judgment, with some reasons why it
should be thus managed; then I shall adjoin some
practical applications.

I. There is a judgment ordained by God, and to
be declared to men; that is, concerning the persons
and actions of men performed in this life. How just
and fit it is that there should be such a judgment,
how useful and requisite the declaration thereof is
upon several accounts, (for engaging men upon the
practice of virtue and restraining them from vice, for
the preservation and maintenance of human society,
for the support and defence of religion, for the vin-
dication of Divine Providence, and illustration of all
God's holy attributes,) I have already endeavoured
to declare; and in that regard I shall content my-
self now to say, that as upon the apparent equity

SER.M. and usefulness of this doctrine all nations commonly
XXXIII. have ever embraced the general substance thereof, as
Just. M. p.
1. et p. 106. a fundamental principle of their religion, (all men
commonly with a ready inclination having avowed it
reasonable to suppose that every man after this life
shall be brought unto a just and impartial bar, where
his doings shall be exactly scanned, and his person
answerably doomed unto a comfortable or afflictive
recompense,) so our religion, in a peculiar manner,
doth most expressly assert, most clearly describe, and
most vigorously inculcate it, with all possible advan-
tage, both for the clearing God's dealings and attri-
butes, and for the excitement of men to a virtuous
and pious life. The nature, manner, process, and
result of the future judgment are in the holy scrip-
ture most punctually set down.

1. It teacheth us, that God hath appointed a de-
terminate time for this judgment. *God,* saith St.
Acts xvii.
31. ii. 20. Paul, *hath appointed a day, in which he will judge*
Jude 6. *the world in righteousness;* that which is called
the day of judgment, the last day, the day of the
Lord, the great and the illustrious day; and, by
2 Tim. i.
18. iv. 8. signal excellency, *the day;* and, *that day;* inti-
1 Thes. v. 4. mating, beside the certainty of the thing itself, the
Heb. x. 25. most especial regard that men are concerned to bear
thereto.

2. That in order to this judgment all the actions
of men are with greater exactness registered in
books; (the books of divine omniscience, seeing all
things present, and retaining all things past, which
nothing can escape;) *The books* (it is said in the
Revelation) *were opened,* and the *dead were judged*
from the things written in the books, according to
their works.

(Job xiii.
27. xiv.
17.)
Rev. xx.
12.
Dan. vii.
10.

3. That, in order thereto, there shall be (effected SERM. by divine power and command) a general resurrec-XXXIII.
tion of all persons, both *just and unjust*: *The hour*, ^{Acts xxiv.}
saith our Lord, *is coming, in which all that are in* ^{15.} _{John v. 28.}
the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

4. That then all persons so raised shall be presented at the bar of our Lord, to answer and undergo their trial; *I saw*, saith St. John, *the great Rev. xx. 12.*
and small standing before God's throne; and, *We Rom. xiv.*
must all, saith St. Paul, *be made appear, and be* ^{10.} _{Φαντασθαι.}
set forth at the judgment-seat of Christ; and, *The* ^{2 Cor. v.}
Son of man, saith our Lord, *shall sit upon the* ^{10.} _{Πατέρα-θεα.}
throne of his glory, and all nations shall be gath- Matt. xxv.
thered together before him. ^{31, 32.}

5. That then and there every thought, every word, every work of men shall be throughly disclosed and discussed; so that it, together with its due quality and desert, shall plainly appear; all the designs and pretences of men shall be laid bare; every case shall be considered; every plea heard and scanned; the merits of every cause weighed in an even balance, according to truth and equity; men's neglects and omissions of duty shall also come under consideration; an account will be exacted of all the talents entrusted to any man, (of the abilities, opportunities, and advantages he ever had of doing God service,) and of what improvements answerable he hath made; what men have done themselves, and what they have done by others, from the influence of their advice, their persuasion, or their example, shall be searched out and poised; *God*, saith St. ^{1 Cor. iv. 5.}

SERM. Paul, *will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of hearts;*

Rom. ii. 29. and, *Of every idle word that men shall speak, they*
^{1 Pet. 4. 5.} *shall render an account at the day of judgment,*
 Matt. xii. 36. *saih our Lord; and, After a long time, saith he*
^{18.} *again, the Lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them, &c. and, Every work, saith*
^{4.} *the Preacher, God shall bring into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

6. That upon each man, according to the true quality of his doings, thus detected, examined, and stated, a definitive sentence shall pass, whereby he shall be acquitted and approved, or condemned and ^{1 Cor. iv. 5.} reprobated ; τότε ὁ ἔκαστος γενήσεται ἐκάστῳ, *Then, saith St. Paul, praise shall be to each one : praise, that is, generally, (by an εὐφημισμὸς, or favourable manner of speech,) a due taxation and esteem, according to*
^{Matt. xxv. 21, 26.} *merit : then, Well done, good and faithful servant, and, O thou bad and slothful servant, shall be pronounced to one or the other sort of men, respectively, according to their demeanour here.*

Misericordia eius. 7. That according to the purport of this sentence Heb. xi. 26. a discrimination shall be made ; and to one party a gracious reward, correspondent to the quality and measure of their good works, in a blissful place ; to the other, a sore punishment, in proportion to their demerits, in a place of misery : to the one, everlasting joy and glory above in heaven ; to the other, endless sorrow and shame beneath in hell, shall be Matt. xvi. assigned and dispensed effectually. *The Son of man*
^{27.} *shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels ; and then he shall reward every man accord-*
^{Matt. xxv. 32, &c.} *ing to his works ; he will separate them one from*

another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set his sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left: then the King shall say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:— and, Then he shall say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels: and, the good and faithful servant shall enter into his Master's joy; the bad and slothful shall be cast into utter darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth: so our Lord himself expresseth it: and St. Paul thus; We must, saith he, all appear before the tribunal of God, ἵνα κορίσηται ἔκαστος, that each one may bear away the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad: and, God will render unto every man according to his works: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil: and even of old the prophet Daniel thus briefly did express this different doom; Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Hence in regard to one party is the time of judgment styled the season of refreshment, the day of redemption, the time of recompense; in reference to the other, the day of wrath, the day of destruction, the time of vengeance; when our Lord will, as St. Paul saith, take vengeance on them

Acts iii. 19.
Eph. iv. 30.
Luke xiv.
Col. iii. 24.
Rom. ii. 5.
2 Pet. iii. 7.
2 Thes. i. 8.

SERM. *that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*

8. We are also further taught, that all this shall be transacted in a regular, public, and most solemn manner, in open court, in the face and audience of

^{2 Thes. i. 7.} all the world, before angels and men. For our Lord
^{Luke ix. 26.} Matt. xxv. is described coming to judgment with attendance
^{31. xvi. 27.} Jude 14.
^{1 Cor. vi. 2.} Matt. xix.
^{28.} and all men are represented as present at the trial,
^{Luke xii. 8, 9.} Matt. x. 32. saith our Lord, *shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God; but he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God:* and, *There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known: whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.*

9. That also the judgment shall pass to the full conviction and entire satisfaction of all that are present; so that each one concerned therein shall be forced in conscience to acquiesce in his doom, as most just and equal; the condemned stooping with awe to his justice; the absolved adoring with humble reverence his mercy; the spectators applauding with admiration his holy wisdom: for that day

^{Rom. ii. 5.} will be, as St. Paul calleth it, *a day of revelation of God's righteous judgment;* and God in regard thereto is represented speaking thus; *To me, as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow, and*

every tongue shall give glory to God: and, our S E R M. *Lord, in that day, saith St. Paul, will be glorified* XXXIII. *in his saints, and admired in all them that believe:* ^{2 Thess. i. 10.} *and, He will then, as it is in St. Jude, convince all* ^{10.} *Jude 15.* *that are ungodly of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all the hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.* So that thereupon those confessions and acclamations of praise in the Revelation shall be resounded through heaven; *Alleluia; Salvation, and* ^{Rev. xix. 2.} *glory, and power, be to the Lord our God; for* ^{xvi. 7. vii.} *true and righteous are his judgments: Salvation be unto our Lord, that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb: Great and wonderful are thy works, O Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, O thou King of saints.*

Thus do the holy Pandects of our religion set out that judgment, which all men hereafter must undergo; wherein all the attributes of God shall be conspicuously glorified; his wonderful clemency shall be sweetly displayed, his exact justice shall be terribly demonstrated, his perfect wisdom shall be clearly unfolded; wherein the knotty intrigues of Providence shall be loosed, and the mysterious depths of the divine counsels shall be laid open; and God's honour, which now by the bold and rash judgments of men is often attacked, shall be thoroughly cleared and repaired, to the joyful satisfaction of all pious men, and sad confusion of the impious; wherein the great wisdom of those, who before all things choose to be good and to serve God, and the extreme folly of those who scorn or neglect piety, shall be most evidently apparent; wherein, finally, all scores that now so undiscernibly run on shall be exactly

SERM. quitted and even; impartial right shall be done;
XXXIII. every man shall have his due assigned and rendered
 to him.

But let so much suffice concerning the judgment appointed: we proceed to the next particular, the Judge ordained; *he*; that is, Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

II. The original right and absolute power of judging doth inseparably pertain to God Almighty, whose creatures, whose servants, whose subjects we are, and consequently to whose judgment we stand obnoxious; as he is naturally the Sovereign Lord and King of the world, so he is, as the apostle calleth him, *κριτὴς πάντων*, the *Judge of all* persons and things; and particularly *Judge of all the earth*, or of all men, as Abraham did style him; as upon the grounds specified we do owe obedience to the laws he prescribeth us, performance of the service he alotteth us, and improvement of the talents he committeth to us; so we do thence stand obliged to render an account to him of our correspondent behaviour, and due management in those respects, and are liable to the judgment he shall make thereof: all judgment therefore must be exercised either immediately by God himself, or in subordination to him; in his name and right, and by virtue of authority derived from him; otherwise that of St. Paul, *Who art thou that judgest another's servant*, might be alleged against any, who, without license or commission from him, should presume to judge us.

Now that immediately God should administer any judgment, is incongruous to his nature and to ours; it is particularly unsuitable to the manner of this judgment, which God designeth to be such as may pass

openly before all the world, to the conspicuous declaration of his glorious justice and mercy, to the clear satisfaction and conviction of all persons interested therein : which, that it might be, *it was fit*, as St. Austin saith, *that they who were to be judged should see their judge*; ^ait is fit, that the assistants and spectators, or witnesses thereof, should discern the process : but the glorious and dreadful presence of God cannot be discernible by us, or would not be supportable; *He*, saith St. Paul, *inhabiteth inaccessible light*, so that no man hath seen, or can see him: and, *Thou canst not see my face*, saith he to Moses; *for there shall no man see me, and live*: ^{1 Tim. vi. 16.} ^{Exod. xxxiii. 20.} ^{Isa. vi. 2.} that majesty, before which the purest seraphims, being dazzled with its infinite brightness, are constrained to veil their faces; that presence, of which the prophet saith, *The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burnt in his presence; yea, the world, and all that dwell therein*; Nah. i. 5. ^(Ps. cxi. 32.) how should frail and impure flesh sustain? how should guilty sinners appear before him? *Who may stand in his sight when he is angry?* when he is angry, at whose wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation: Ps. lxxvi. 7. ^{cxxx. 3.} Ps. xlvi. 6. ^{cxliii. 2.} Jer. x. 10. ^{Job xxvi. 11.} What ear of mortal man could endure that voice, at which the earth melteth; that reproof, at which the pillars of heaven are astonished? It being therefore from the divine excellency impossible or inconvenient, that God himself, immediately as such, should exercise judgment; it hath pleased him, in his stead, to constitute one most fit for that

^a Etenim ea quæ judicantur, oportebat videre judicem et scire hunc a quo judicantur, &c. *Iren.* iii. 9.

Rectum erat, ut judicandi viderent judicem. *Aug.*

SERM. employment : as he for particular temporal judgments here hath appointed princes and governors visibly to manage them as his ministers and vice-ge-rents in his name and behalf ; so that universal and ultimate judgment he hath (for his own greater glory and our special benefit) committed unto his beloved Son Jesus, our blessed Mediator and Sa-viour ; the same who, with most admirable conde-scension of grace and charity, did once come hither in our nature to rescue us from sin and misery ; who underwent so many crosses and troubles for us ; who freely laid down his life to redeem and save us ; he (1 Cor. xv. 27.) it is, who is ὁρισμένος ἐπὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ κριτὴς, decreed and determined by God (or under him, as his substitute and deputy) to be our judge : so in our text ; and Acts xvii. 31. so again St. Paul ; God hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, εἰ ἀνθρῷ φῶτισεν, by the man, or in the man, whom he Rom. xiv. 10. hath ordained ; whence it is called the judgment-
2 Cor. v. 10. seat of Christ, before which we must appear : and,
1 Cor. iv. 4. John v. 22. 27. 2 Tim. iv. 1. The Father, saith our Lord himself, judgeth no man, (that is, immediately and separately,) but hath given all judgment to the Son : and, The Father, he addeth, hath given to the Son the authority, and to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man ; that is, God hath conferred on him the sovereign regal authority, and hath particularly committed to him that prime branch thereof, judicial power ; even as he is the Son of man : so that as in our nature he performed all that was requisite to save us, as in our nature he was exalted to God's right hand to rule and bless us ; ^bso for consummation of all

^b Illa forma videbitur Filii, quam sibi per sacramentum incarnationis univit, &c. *Prosp. Sent.* 337.

done in our regard, he shall in our nature appear to S E R M.
judge us ; awarding to us the rewards he purchas- XXXIII.
ed for us, or punishments for the contempt of his fa-
vours.

And, indeed, that he under this name and notion
was designed to this office, even the ancient prophets
did foreshew : for it was *one like the Son of man*, ^{Dan. vii.}
whom Daniel did behold coming with the clouds ^{13, 14.}
of heaven, having all royal dominion and power
given unto him ; and it was, according to Isaiah's
predictions, the *Son, born and given unto us, upon* ^{Isa. viii. 14.}
whose shoulder the government should be, and to ^{ix. 6, 7. xi.}
whom the kingdom should be assigned, *to order it,*
and establish it, with judgment and justice for
ever.

The point then is manifest, that our Saviour Jesus,
by designation and deputation from God, is invested
with this eminent office and power. And why it
should be so, many reasons, many fair congruities,
may be assigned.

1. It was requisite (as we before touched) that
the judge should be visible, and audible ; such whom
the parties concerned might (without extreme sur-
prise and amazement) discern and converse with, in
order to their clearer and fuller satisfaction, or con-
viction : such our Lord, the Son of man, clothed
with glorified flesh, will be ; his mild and sweet,
though bright and stately aspect, all men in some
manner may be capable of seeing ; his calm and
clear voice all men may hear : him the just may
with cheerful satisfaction behold smiling on them
with gracious kindness ; and the wicked also with
sad confusion may view frowning toward them with
just disdain ; those with comfortable joy may hear

SERM. him acquitting, commanding, and blessing them; XXXIII. these with due regret also may hear him convincing, reproofing, and denouncing the fatal curse on them: so that hereupon the former, with humble thankfulness, shall willingly acknowledge and praise his grace; the latter, with shameful horror, constrainedly Rev. i. 7. shall confess their guilt before him; *Behold, saith St. John, with an emphatical regard it seems to this consideration, he cometh in the clouds; and every eye shall see him, even they who pierced him:* and, Matt. xxiv. 30. *They, saith our Lord himself, shall see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven, in power &c. 64. xxv. 34, and great glory:* and our Lord is represented in judgment speaking and arguing the case with all parties concerned, receiving their plea, and expressing his mind to them: this is a kind of natural capacity qualifying him for this employment; but there are considerations of a higher nature peculiarly fitting him for it.

2. It was indeed a good part of that regal office, which God, in reward of his obedience, and to declare his acceptance thereof, did confer upon him; John xvii. 2. giving him *a power over all flesh, all authority in Mat. xxviii. 18. heaven and earth;* whence it is by St. Paul called *his kingdom;* *I charge thee,* saith he to Timothy, *before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom:* he being then our King, and as such the fountain of all justice, must either himself in person, or by some delegate, administer it; but that he should immediately do it, divers special reasons do suggest themselves.

3. It is an office of too great eminence and dignity to be imparted to any other: he alone who subsists

in union with God, who is the Son of God, who hath SERM.
most highly pleased God, who hath merited a so-XXXIII.
vereignty over us, and a supreme eminency above all
creatures, is capable of the honour to determine those
points of the highest importance concerning the final
doom of God's creatures, and the salvation of those
souls whom he hath purchased ; *Worthy is he alone* Rev. v. 9,
to receive the book, (of judgment,) *and to open the*^{12.}
seals thereof; because he was slain, and hath re-
deemed us to God by his blood : *Worthy is the*
Lamb (worthy exclusively, and solely) *that was*
slain to receive the power and honour, the glory
and blessing, annexed to this high office.

As there is nothing more apt to beget in us veneration toward him, than considering that he shall be our judge, upon whose sentence our fate and felicity must depend ; so it is therefore most fit, that it incommunicably and solely should belong to him ; especially seeing God with especial regard to his honour did assign the judicial office to him : the *Father*, John v. 22,
hath committed all judgment to the^{23.}
Son ; that all men might honour the Son, as they
do the Father.

4. He alone also hath capacities proper for this Διὰ τοῦτο
judicature : he only hath that divine faculty of γάρ εἰς μό-
searching men's hearts ; he only is furnished with νες προπή-
wisdom to know all matters of fact that ever της ἀναμάθ-
were, and to discern the right in every case ; he ετος. μόνος.
above all, being absolutely good, is endued with per- Clem. Al.
fect equity of mind, and immutable love of right, Pæd. I. 2.
always disposing him to judge most justly ; he alone can have in him that μετριωπάθεια, or exact tempera- Heb. v. 2.
ment of affection toward men, which is requisite to the distribution of equal justice toward them, accord-

SERMONING to due measures of mercy and severity; the XXXIII. highest angel in heaven were incapable so rightly

to distinguish the strict bounds of these things.

Wherefore in regard to these dispositions peculiar to him, we are even by the ancient prophets informed,

Isa. xi. 2, that this office is allotted to him; *The spirit of the Lord,* saith Isaiah, *shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom—and shall make him of quick under-*

standing in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with

Isa. xlvi. 3. *equity for the meek of the earth: and, A bruised reed* (saith God in the same prophet, intimating his incomparable sagacity, equity, and temper, as it were, for this purpose) *shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth*

Psal. xlv. 7. *judgment unto truth: and, Thou, saith the Psalmist concerning him, lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity: therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*

5. By this designation the glory of God is especially promoted, his most excellent attributes being much illustrated thereby: his wisdom appeareth in constituting one so in all respects most fit to discharge the office, and his goodness most clearly shines therein: for since it was requisite that a judgment should pass upon us, how could the terror thereof be better allayed, than by putting it into the hands of his Son? to whose cognizance, were the choice permitted to us, should we rather submit our actions, than to his? to whom rather should we freely commit all our life and welfare, than to him,

who by nature is so nearly allied to us, and hath not SERM. disdained to call us *brethren*? who in disposition of XXXIII. spirit is so *meek and lowly*, so *merciful* and *com-* ^{Matt. xi. 29.} *passionate*? who here was visibly in disposition and ^{Heb. ii. 17.} iv. 15. demeanour a lamb, and is represented to us continuing such; than to him, who by so many signal experiments hath expressed an excess of kindness towards us, and tenderness of our welfare; who hath conspicuously evidenced himself to be the best friend to mankind; that he ardently desireth the salvation of all men, even of his worst enemies; for whom he willingly did spend his blood, for whom he dying earnestly prayed; whom he continually wooeth to reconciliation and repentance, and consequently to the enjoyment of greatest happiness? How then could God more plainly express his goodness toward us, than in assigning such a judge for us.

How also could he exhibit a more illustrious instance of his justice, and love to righteousness, than in advancing him to so glorious an office, who out of perfect compliance to his will did freely stoop so low, and gladly undergo so much? Worthy of God it was, and a congruous retribution, to place the crown on ^{Rev. v. 12.} his head, to put the sceptre into his hand, who willingly bore a cross, who patiently submitted to a scourge; to constitute him the Judge, who, out of abundant piety to God and charity to God's creature, was contented to be arraigned, to be sentenced, to be executed as a malefactor: he dearly purchased the right to be *Lord of dead and living*, and just it was ^{Rom. xiv. 9.} that in effect he should obtain it.

6. Just it likewise was, that to him, immediately and solemnly, should be consigned a power to acknowledge and reward his faithful friends and ser-

S E R M. vants ; those who had believed his word, had observed his laws, had out of love and respect done much and suffered much for him.

Just also it was, that he should be empowered to do himself right upon his proud and spiteful enemies ; that he should see them lying under his feet, and at his disposal, who had so scornfully insulted on him, and so cruelly misused him ; that he righteously should judge them, who so maliciously had accused and so injuriously condemned him ; should chastise them severely, who most unmercifully had afflicted and slaughtered him ; should worthily reprobate all those, who had unworthily rejected him : in fine, that he should render a due recompence to all wicked persons, who by distrusting his word, by despising his overtures of grace and mercy, by resisting his will and rejecting his authority, by trampling upon his holy doctrine and laws, had wronged, had dishonoured, had disclaimed him.

7. This appointment of Jesus for our Judge is further very conducible to our edification, in way of excitement to the practice of our duty, and encouragement thereto ; in way of consolation and satisfaction to our soul.

It considered is apt to raise in us a high reverence and dread of our Saviour ; and consequently to dispose us to the observance of his laws, and imitation of his example.

It is matter of special comfort and encouragement to consider, that hence assuredly we shall find a fair and favourable trial ; since it is no enemy, not one disaffected, yea, not one indifferently affected toward us, who shall judge us, but our best friend ;

from whom we may expect not only justice and SERM.
equity, but all the favour and kindness our cause XXXIII.
will bear.

It also duly pondered is most proper to work in us
an earnest care, and fear of sinning, and thereby of
becoming obnoxious to condemnation : for what an
aggravation will it yield to our whether foolish per-
vereness or slothful negligence ; how extreme dis-
ingenuity, how wretched ingratitude will it argue in
us, to be cast and condemned by such a judge ; a
judge so fair and equal, so mild and gentle, so benign
and favourable to us ; so willing to acquit us, so de-
sirous to save us ! With what face, think we, having
transgressed his most good and righteous laws, hav-
ing rejected all his gracious tenders of mercy and fa-
vour, having defeated all his most serious purposes,
and frustrated his most painful endeavours for our
welfare ; having violated our manifold obligations
and engagements to him ; having abused his so un-
expressible great love and good-will toward us ;
having hence deplorably forfeited all his favour, and
incurred his most grievous displeasure ; with what
face, I say, having done all this, shall we appear in
his presence ? how then shall we bear the frowns of
his tender love changed into fierce disdain, of highest
patience turned into extreme fury, of so terrible a
majesty provoked by so heinous affronts ? with what
heart shall we hear that once most sweet and charm-
ing voice, which in so pleasant and affectionate a
strain did sound forth words of peace and comfort in
our ears ; that so kindly invited us to reconciliation, ^{2Cor.v.20.}
so meekly sued us to a compliance with him, so li-
berally offered to us the best things in the world
upon so gentle terms, now only uttering toward us

SERM. XXXIII. bitter complaints and sore rebukes; thundering forth words of indignation and terror, denouncing most horrible menaces and curses upon us.

Thus, and to such purposes, is Jesus our Lord appointed to be our Judge: I shall only further touch the manner of his exercising and executing this office, or the way of his address and proceeding thereto; the which in holy scripture (for the begetting in us a regard, veneration, and awe suitable thereto) is described to be with greatest glory, state, and solemnity. Our Lord came once in a meek humility to shew us our duty, but he shall come again with a dreadful majesty to exact an account thereof; taking his progress from the highest heavens in most royal magnificent equipage, attended upon with a numerous, or with a numberless, and most pompous train

^{Matt. xxv. 31.} of angels, (*with all the holy angels*, it is expressly said,) accompanied with triumphal shouts and ac-

^{Jude 14. 1 Thess. iv. 16.} clamations; *a trumpet of God*, (that is, a wonder-

^{2 Thess. i. 7.} fully and unconceivably sonorous trumpet, blown, as it were, by the mouth of God,) and *the voice of an archangel* resounding before him an universal summons, with a noise so loud and piercing, as shall im-

^{1 Cor. xv. 52.} mediately, *in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye*,

shake all the earth, and rouse all the dead out of their mortal slumber; the irresistible breath of that all-powerful voice wafting them, together with all

^{1 Thess. iv. 17.} surviving people, through the clouds into the pre-

^{Matt. xxv. 31.} sence of their Judge, conspicuously seated in most glorious state upon his royal tribunal.

^{Acts i. 11.} *This same Jesus*, said the two angels to the apostles, expressing this matter in the most simple and plain manner, *shall come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven: a cloud took him up from*

their eyes then, and the clouds, as they imply, SERM. should restore him to their sight ; for, *Behold, saith* XXXIII.
St. John, he cometh with the clouds ; and every eye Rev. i. 7.
Matt. xxiv.
shall see him : and, *They shall see the Son of man* 30. xvi. 64.
coming upon the clouds of heaven in power and Matt. xxv.
great glory ; and, When the Son of man shall come 31. xvi. 27.
2 Thess. i. 17.
in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then
shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, saith our
Lord himself somewhat more explicitly : but St.
Paul with most punctuality describeth the manner
of his appearance ; *The Lord, saith he, shall de-* 1 Thess. iv.
scend from heaven with a shout, (εν κελεύσματι, with 16.
1 Cor. xv.
an exciting or commanding summons,) with the 52.
voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God;
and the dead in Christ shall rise first : then we,
which are alive and remain, shall be caught up to-
gether with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord
in the air ; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.
In such manner, to the purpose of exciting due
respect and dread within us, is our Lord represented
at the end of the world to come down from heaven,
for the exercising this judgment.

III. I proceed to the last particular observed in
the text, which is the objects, or the extent of the
judgment ordained : whom is our Lord ordained to
judge ? how many shall they be ? It is resolved ;
all, without exception ; expressed here by the words
quick and dead : and elsewhere by St. Paul ; *I* 2 Tim. iv. 1.
Rom. xiv. 9.
charge thee, saith he to Timothy, before God and
the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick
and dead at his appearing and his kingdom : and
by St. Peter likewise ; *Who, saith he, concerning* 1 Pet. iv. 5.
profane men, shall render an account to him that
is ready to judge both the quick and dead : which

SERM. places evidently do confirm the truth of the proposition, that all men are obnoxious and shall be subjected to this judgment ; but yet so that the words themselves, *quick and dead*, may seem to need some explication ; for it being a common law, to which all men by nature, such as it now stands, after the *curse*, are subject to undergo death ; for thence *it is, 48.* *appointed for men once to die, and after death judgment* ; and, *What man is he,* saith the Psalmist, *that shall not see death ?* and that being so, why should not the dead comprehend all that are to be judged ? accordingly as we see it *expressed in the Revelation ; I saw the dead, great and small, standing before God—and the dead were judged for the things written in the books, according to their works.* The dead were judged ; no mention is made of the living : wherefore, to evade this objection, some have interpreted the dead and living, not for a distinction of persons, but of parts in men ; of the living souls and dead bodies of men : others have taken the words as signifying metaphorically *the living*, that is, righteous men, say they, or persons endued with a spiritual life ; *Eph. ii. 1.* and *the dead*, that is, persons *dead in trespasses and sins*, or void of spiritual sense and activity. But the difficulty is not so mighty as to force us upon so remote and absonous interpretations, St. Paul having plainly enough shewed us how to understand his words, and how to solve the knot propounded ; that by the living are to be understood those who shall be found, as it were surprised, alive at our Lord's coming ; by the dead, all other persons, who, from the beginning before that time, had deceased, and should be raised up at the sound of the

last trump; *This we say to you,* saith he to the SERM. Thessalonians, *in the word of the Lord,* that we ^{XXXIII.} *which live, remaining at the presence of the Lord,* ^{1 Thess. iv.} shall not prevent them which are asleep. Our Lord is therefore supposed by the apostle to find some alive at his coming; wherefore, that which is affirmed concerning all men being appointed to taste death, (being otherwise, as the instances of Enoch and Elias shew, liable to exception,) is to be understood, by a synecdoche very ordinary in such cases, for the incomparably greater part of men; for all indeed, but one generation; or with this abatement, all but those whose death shall be prevented by our Lord's appearance; (the which is set out as very sudden and unexpected, *like the coming of a thief in the night;*) even those men also being in nature and condition mortal like others, although accidentally thus escaping the actual stroke of death. Neither shall even those persons be so exempted from death, but that they must undergo somewhat equivalent thereto; a change, which shall render them alike prepared for judgment with those who had undergone death; for, *Behold,* saith St. Paul again ^{1 Cor. xv.} to the Corinthians, *I tell you a mystery; We shall* ^{51.} *not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye:* which words alone do with sufficient evidence declare the meaning of this distinction between *quick* and *dead.* The sum is, that all persons, none excepted, of what condition or quality, what nation or time, what sex or what age soever, shall be exposed to the judgment; high and low, rich and poor, wise and simple, learned and ignorant, good and bad; the mightiest princes and lords, no less than the meanest subjects

SER.M. and slaves ; the subtlest statesmen and deepest scholars, no less than the silliest idiots : in a word, most universally *all* without any distinction, any privilege, any acceptance of persons, all and every one must certainly appear at this bar, must undergo this trial, must here receive their sentence and doom, must undergo reward or punishment accordingly.

IV. The doctrinal part I have thus gone through of this grand point ; it remaineth to make some application thereof. The considering it is indeed most necessary, and exceedingly profitable in many respects : there is no kind of virtue or good practice, which the serious consideration thereof is not apt to produce ; no good affection, which it may not serve to excite ; no good duty, to which it doth not powerfully engage us : there is likewise no ill passion, which it may not help to quell or repress ; no bad design or action, which it may not effectually deter or discourage us from. Of so many particular uses I shall only touch those which are most obvious; especially those unto which the scripture doth expressly apply the consideration thereof.

1. It greatly doth engage us to be very circumspect in all our conversation, and vigilant over our ways ; for since by irreversible decree it is appointed, that we must render an account of every thought arising in our mind, (at least of those which find harbour and entertainment there;) of every word that passeth through our mouth ; of every action which we do undertake ; what exceeding reason have we, with most attentive and accurate regard, to mind whatever we do ! since it is certain, that for all these things we shall be judged, but uncertain

Matt. xxv. 13. xxiv. 42, 44. Rev. iii. 3. to us when we shall be called thereto ; how watchful xvi. 15.

are we concerned to be, that we be not surprised, and SERM. found unready to yield a good account: how observ- XXXIII. ant in all reason should we be of our Lord's admonition in the Gospel; *Watch, for ye do not know the day, nor the hour, when the Son of man cometh:* how affected should we be with that warning, or menace, in the Revelation; *If thou dost not watch, I shall come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know when I come upon thee!* It may be, as we see intimated, the next day, for all we can know, or the next hour, when death seizing on us shall carry us into that prison or place of durance, where we shall be detained until the time of our being presented at the bar; and what an unexpressible misery then will it be, to be found unprepared for the trial, and unable to render a good account! If we be quite asleep, in a total neglect of our duty; or if we be drowsy, in a careless and sluggish performance thereof; or if our senses rest amused upon other cares and businesses impertinent to this account; in what an extreme danger do we abide! as our Saviour again doth warn, advising thus; *Take heed* Luke xxi. *to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be over-^{34.} charged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and^{3.} cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.* You know what the fortune was of the foolish virgins, whose *lamps were gone out* for want Matt. xxv. ^{8.} of oil; that is, whose souls were destitute of true goodness, and whose lives consequently did not shine with good works; how, being surprised in that case by the bridegroom's coming, they were unfit to meet him, they were excluded from his favour, they were rejected with an, *I know you not.* The like fate Matt. xxiv. ^{48.} you know of that bad servant, who, *saying in his*

SERM. *heart, My Lord delayeth to come,* (that is, not believing, or not considering his state in relation to the future judgment,) *began to beat his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;* (that is, did live in the practice of injustice, uncharitable-ness, and intemperance;) his fate shall be this; *The Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites:* the same, if we do live in gross neglect, or in heinous violation of our duty, will be our doom. *Let therefore* (as our Lord again doth enjoin and inculcate) *our loins be girded about, and our lamps burning; and we ourselves like men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he com-eth, we may open unto him immediately.* *Let us,* as St. Peter exhorteth, *gird up the loins of our mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that (in case of our faithful and constant obedience) shall be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

¹ Pet. i. 13. ² Pet. iii. ^{12.} In fine, considering these things, *what manner of persons then ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming of our Lord?* as that great apostle doth again admonish and argue.

2. The consideration of this point is the most effectual means possible to beget and preserve sincerity in us; disposing us to live simply, without dissimulation or deceit, speaking as we think, doing what we profess, performing what we promise, being as we seem; for, seeing our hearts must be thoroughly searched and sifted; since our most retired thoughts must be disclosed; since our most secret designs and

our desires must come to light, and be exposed to SERM.
the public view of angels and men ; since the day XXXIII.
approacheth, when (all vizards being taken off, all
varnish of pretence being wiped away) every person
shall appear stark naked in his own true shape and
colours ; every thing shall seem what it really is, di-
vested of false glosses, what profit can it be now to
dissemble, to conceal, or to disguise our thoughts or
doings ? To what purpose doth it serve to palliate
our ambitious or covetous intents with specious garbs
of zeal or conscience ? What comfort can we find in
driving on our self-interests, or satisfying our private
resentments, in disturbing the peace of mankind, or
fomenting stirs and factions in the world under such
masks ? What a folly is it to delude men with false
appearances, or rather by them to abuse themselves ;
seeing they soon will be rightly informed, and we
grievously disgraced for it ? What other satisfaction
indeed can we have, than in real goodness and pure
integrity in heart and life ; whereby we may now
approve our consciences unto God, and shall afterward
by his unquestionable judgment be approved to all
the world ? our true wisdom is to be *εἰλικρινεῖς καὶ*
ἀπρόσκοτοι, as St. Paul speaketh ; that is, *simple and* Phil. i. 10.
inoffensive toward the day of Christ ; that is, with-
out any indirect regard or design, conscientiously to
perform our duty toward God and man, in order to
the rendering a good account at the last judgment ;
our best comfort will prove that of St. Paul—*the testi- 2 Cor. i. 10.*
mony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly
sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace
of God, we have had our conversation in the world.

3. The consideration of this point should render
us very sober and serious in all our thoughts, our

SER M. opinions, our affections, our actions ; suppressing all
XXXIII. proud and haughty conceits, all admiration of these
transitory things, all vicious excesses, all vain curiosities, all wanton joys and satisfactions : for,

Why should any apprehension of worldly state, of wealth, of honour, of wit, of any natural or acquired endowment, puff up our minds, seeing the day is near at hand, which in these regards will quite level men, and set them all upon even ground before an impartial bar, where no such things shall be had in any consideration or regard; when all secular and external advantages being laid aside, the moral qualities of men only shall be taxed and estimated^b; a day wherein all these admired vanities shall vanish into nothing ; all our empty tumours shall be depressed ; all the fond arrogance of man shall be confounded ; so that the proud and profane ones of the world shall be constrained to say after *Wisd. v. 8*, the Wise Man, *What hath pride profited us ? or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us ? All these things are passed away as a shadow, and as a post that hasted by.*

And why should we much value those splendid toys, or that sordid trash, which men here do so eagerly scrape, and scramble, and scuffle for ; which then evidently will be discomfited, will at least appear worthless and unprofitable to us ? what indeed in this world, supposing this judgment, being truly rated, can seem great, or worthy to affect us ?

And why, having affairs on foot of so immensely vast importance, should we amuse ourselves with

^b Οὐ πλούσιος, οὐ τένης, οὐ δυνάστης, οὐκ ἀσθενής, οὐ σοφὸς, οὐκ ἀσοφός, οὐ δοῦλος, οὐκ ἐλεύθερος, οὐδεὶς ἐκεῖ φανεῖται, ἀλλὰ τῶν προσωπῶν τοίτων συντριβέντων, ἡ τῶν ἔργων ἐξέτασις ἔσται μόνη. Chrys. in Matt. xvii. 9.

trivial matters, impertinent at least, if not prejudicial to our main accounts ?

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And how shall we dare to embrace the serpent of sinful excess, considering, beside the poison in its body, what a dreadful sting it carrieth in the tail thereof ; how these flashes of pleasure do kindle a flame, that will scorch us to eternity ? One thought of judgment mixed with any brutish enjoyments were enough, one would think, to allay their sweet-ness, to render them indeed not only insipid, but distasteful and bitter to us.

And how can we be easily transported into wild merriments, suffering our minds to be ruffled, and the tone of our reason to be slackened by them, if we consider how infinitely serious business lieth upon us ; what a dismal hazard we stand in, how nearly our everlasting welfare lieth at stake ? If here in this world we were bound in few days to undergo a trial concerning our life, all our estate, and all our reputation, we should deem it seasonable to be somewhat intent, to be indeed very solicitous about what we should plead, and how we should get off ; rather than to be lightly sportiⁿg at, and loosening our minds in little pleasant humours ; much more rather than to be loosing our minds, and banishing all sober thoughts away in exorbitant frolics : extremely wild or stupid would he seem, who in such a case should so behave himself : it is plainly the case of us all, in a degree infinitely more high than we can suppose any other to be : wherefore reflecting thereon should, methinks, quash all extravagant and absolute mirth, apt to beat out of our minds and hearts the care of our souls ; should compose our minds into a very serious frame ; should presently

SER.M. drive us into, and constantly hold us in, a sober sadness
XXXIII. of heart ; it is a duty which both in wisdom
^{2 Cor. v. 11.} and piety we do owe to this great matter, (*the terror of the Lord*, as St. Paul calleth it,) to fear and dread it : with which disposition of spirit excessive transports of carnal joy are scarce consistent : however let us hear (let us, I say, whose spirits are high, and fancies strong, hear) what the great observer of the world, the Preacher, doth admonish ; ^{Eccles. xi. 9.} *Rejoice, saith he, O young man, in thy youth ; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes : but know, that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment.*

4. The consideration of this point should engage us carefully to improve all the talents by God's providence and grace committed to us ; that is, all the means and abilities, all the advantages and opportunities afforded us of doing good, or serving God. Hath God bestowed wealth upon us ? this will engage us so to use it, as not therewith to cherish our pride, or pamper our luxury, not merely to gratify our pleasure or humour ; but to expend it in succouring our indigent neighbour, or otherwise promoting God's service. Hath God invested us with power ? this should induce us to use it moderately and fruitfully ; not therewith to domineer or insult over our brethren, not anywise to wrong or misuse them ; but to yield protection, aid, and comfort to them ; to afford patronage and succour to right ; to minister encouragement, support, and defence to virtue ; *remembering that we have also a Lord in heaven*, and a judge, to whom we must be accountable. Hath God vouchsafed us any parts, any

^{Eph. vi. 9.}

wit, any knowledge? this should move us to employ them, not so much in contriving projects to advance our own petty interests, or in procuring vain commendation to ourselves, as in setting forth God's praise, in recommending goodness, in drawing men with the most advantage we can to the practice of virtue and piety. Hath God conferred on us any thing of honour or credit among men? this may oblige us not to build high conceits upon it, or to find vain complacences therein; but to use it as an instrument of bringing honour to God, of ministering aid or countenance to the interests of piety: to those purposes, I say, this consideration greatly serveth; for that it is plainly declared, that we are but stewards of these things, having received them in trust, not to use them according to our pleasure, but to employ them with the best advantage for God's service; and accordingly shall in the last judgment be strictly accountable for them; so that if we have embezzled or perverted them to abuse, it will then appear far worse for us, than if we never had received them; much better indeed it will be for us, that we had been poorest beggars, silliest idiots, most despicable wretches here, than not to have duly improved our wealth, parts, and honour to God's service; *To whomsoever much is given, from him much shall be required,* is the rule that punctually in that great audit will be observed.

5. The consideration of this point may induce us to the observing strict justice and equity in all our dealings: there are in this world many advantages of doing injury and iniquity safely in respect to men; without intrenching upon human laws, without incurring any check, or any correction from them;

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Matt. xxv.
14. xxiv. 45.

Luke xiii:
48.

SERM. they reach to very few cases, they retrench only
XXXIII. some great outrages, and punish some enormous crimes, apparently noxious to the peace or welfare of common society ;^c the stroke of human law may also (even where it taketh cognizance, where it maketh provision to secure right, or repair wrong) often be evaded by power, or eluded by sleight, by gift, by favour : but as the divine law doth extend universally to the prohibition of all iniquity whatever, (small as well as great, secret no less than visible,) so the divine judgment inevitably will reach to all : the least wrongful word, by which we hurt the good name of our neighbour, the least exaction or hard dealing with him, the least overreaching him by craft, (however blameless these things may seem here, however they may pass with commendation, as instances of wit or ability,) will surely then be con-

¹ Thess. iv. 6. demned and punished ; *Let no man*, saith St. Paul, *go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter*, διότι ἔκδικος ὁ Κύριος περὶ πάντων τοιούτων, because God will judge and avenge for all these things ; so that, as

² Cor. vi. 9. the same apostle teacheth us, *the unjust, the wrong-foul, the revilers, the rapacious, shall not inherit the kingdom of God* ; that day will detect all wicked fraud and cozenage, will defeat all unjust might and oppression ; no power shall be able to break through, no wit shall skill to decline, no friendship or favour will help to keep off the impartial sentence and the

^{Job xxxiv.} ^{22.} irresistible stroke of that judgment ; *There is no darkness or shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves from being detected, from being prosecuted and punished.* The poor, the

^c Quam angusta innocentia est, ad legem bonum esse, quanto latius officiorum patet, quam juris regula ? *Sen. de Ir.* ii. 27.

meek, the simple, who rather choose to suffer than SERM.
do wrong, shall there find a certain patronage and XXXIII.
a full redress ; that strict abstinence from wrong,
which here may pass for simplicity, shall then be
approved for the best wisdom ; and this overreach-
ing craft, which now men are so conceited of, will
then appear wretched folly, when all ill-gotten pro-
fits with shameful regret shall in effect be refunded,
yea shall bring grievous damages and sore penalties
for them : in fine, then it will be most evident, that
he who injureth another doth indeed chiefly hurt
himself ; he that cheateth his neighbour doth really
gull himself, and abuse his own soul.

6. The consideration of this point is apt to breed charity in us ; charity of all sorts ; charity in giving, charity in forgiving, charity in judging and censuring of men.

1. It should incline us freely to impart our goods, and to contribute our endeavours, for the relief of our poor neighbour ; for that the last judgment will in especial manner proceed upon a regard to the performance or the neglect of this duty : it shall be the test of piety, and a ground of recompense at the last day : to charitable persons, who had relieved him in his poor brethren and members, our Lord himself telleth us, that he will say, *Because I was hungry,* Matt. xxv. *and ye gave me meat ; I was thirsty, and ye gave* ^{35.} *me drink ; I was a stranger, and ye took me in ; I was naked, and ye clothed me ; I was sick, and ye visited me ; I was in prison, and ye came unto me ; therefore, Come, ye blessed of my Father, enter into the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* To them, who contrarily had neglected to succour and comfort their poor

SER.M. brethren, he will pronounce the contrary doom;
XXXIII. *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire,*
Matt. xxv. 41. *prepared for the Devil and his angels: for I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat, &c.* And what argument can there be imagined more forcible to engage us on the practice of this duty?

2. It should likewise dispose us readily to forgive all injuries and discourtesies received from any man: for since we shall at that trial need abundance of favour and mercy from God, we should in all reason and duty be willing to shew the like to others for God's sake and at his command; especially since he hath appointed the doing so for an indispensable condition, without which we shall not receive mercy or pardon from him; so that infallibly, if we will be rigorous and hard to others in this case, we must expect the like extremity and severity from God: for the laws and rules of God's proceeding then are James ii. 13. *these; He shall have judgment without mercy,* Matt. vi. 15. *that hath shewed no mercy; If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will God forgive you your trespasses:* and by a lively example, in way of history or parable, our Lord in the Gospel hath expressed what words (in case of our refusing to remit to our neighbour his debts and trespasses against us) we shall hear, what usage we shall find at that day; Matt. xviii. 32. *O thou wicked servant, (will God say to any such unmerciful person of us,) I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And the Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.*

3. It likewise serveth to restrain us from all un-

due, all rash and harsh censure concerning the persons, the actions, the state of our neighbour; where-
by we do invade our Lord's office, making ourselves judges in his room; whereby we usurp his right, exercising jurisdiction over his subjects; whereby we arrogate to ourselves his attributes, who alone is able to know and judge rightly; *Why*, saith St. Paul, *dost thou judge thy brother?* or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? we shall all stand at the judgment seat of Christ; it is the office of Christ, which we must not encroach upon: and, *Who art thou* (doth he again exposit) *that judgest another's servant?* to his own master he stand-
eth or falleth. We wrong our Lord, in assuming authority over his servants; we wrong our brethren, in making ourselves their masters: and, *Judge nothing before the time*, saith the same apostle, until the Lord come, who shall enlighten the hidden things of darkness, and manifest the counsels of hearts. We blind wretches in effect do make ourselves gods, and sacrilegiously assert his incom-
municable perfections to ourselves, when we presume to search the hearts, or pretend to know the secret intentions of our brethren. Again, *There is*, saith another apostle, one Lawgiver, who can save or de-
stroy: *who art thou that judgest another?* that is, how intolerably rash, unjust, and arrogant art thou, who seatest thyself upon God's tribunal, and thence dost adventure to pronounce doom upon his people! Did we indeed well consider this judgment, we should rather think it advisable to be mindful of our own case, than to pass sentence upon that of others; ob-
serving how liable ourselves are, we should scarce have the heart to carp at others; finding what great

SERM. need our actions will then have of favourable interpretation, we should surely be more candid and mild in censuring other men's actions ; especially considering, that by harsh judgment of others we make our own case worse, and inflame our reckoning ; we directly thence incur guilt, we aggravate our own offences, and render ourselves inexcusable ; we expose ourselves upon that score to condemnation ; for,

Matt. vii. 2. *With what judgment we judge, we shall be judged;*
Luke vi. 37.

Rom. ii. 1. *sured to us again,* our Lord doth say : and, *Inexcusable,* saith St. Paul, *thou art, O man, whoever thou art that judgest ; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself :* and, μὴ στενάζετε James v. 9. κατ' ἀλλήλων, *Do not,* saith St. James, *grudge* (or make moanful complaint) *against one another, lest you be condemned : behold, the Judge standeth before the doors.*

7. It serveth also to support and comfort us, as against all other wrongful dealing, so against injuries of this kind ; against all unjust and uncharitable censures, groundless slanders and surmises, undeserved scorns and reproaches of men ; for that assuredly at that judgment right will be done to him that suffereth in this kind ; his innocence will be cleared, his good name will be vindicated and re-

Ps. xxxvii. paired ; *God will bring forth his righteousness as the light, and his judgment as the noonday ; whence*

6. *approving his conscience to God in well-doing, he*

1 Cor. iv. 3. *may cheerfully say with St. Paul, With me it is a very small thing, that I should be judged of you,*

1 John iii. 21. *or of man's judgment : If our heart do not condemn us,*

we may (whatever the opinions or discourses of man be concerning us) have a cheerful boldness and

comfortable hope in regard to God: the obloquy of SERM. men is a part of that cross which every good man XXXIII. here is appointed to bear, and assuredly shall meet with^e; for the Devil and the world do nothing, if they cannot by impudent assaults dash, or by malicious suggestions blast the practice of goodness: but this consideration may easily raise us to bear it with patience, or with resolution to surmount it; it thence appearing, that it nowise can harm us; for if God is our judge, what can the fancies or the tattles of men concern us; *I will not fear the judgment of men,* Non timebo hominum ^{judicium,} who shall have God for my judge, was with good ^{habiturus} ^{judicem} reason said by St. Jerome. ^{Deum.} ^{Hier.}

8. It upon the like ground should preserve us from being deluded and poisoned by the more favourable opinions of men. There are visibly two great rocks, upon which frequently men do split, and make shipwreck of good conscience; compliance with the practice, and regard to the opinions of others. Men out of complaisance accompany others in doing ill^f; it is called good-nature, it is deemed good manners to do it; so very civilly and genteelly, very nobly and gallantly they go on to perdition, giving up their salvation, in compliment and courtesy to one another: then it is but natural for this most debonnair and generous dealing to requite one another with good words at least, or with some demonstrations of esteem; and it is no less natural

^e Καν πάντες δικαίωσιν, ὁ δὲ δικαστὴς ἀποφῆψίγηται, οὐδεὶς μοὶ λόγος τῆς ἐκείνων ψήφου, καν ἀπαντεῖς ἐπαινέσωσι καὶ θαυμάσωσιν, ἐκεῖνος δὲ μὲ καταδικᾶζῃ, οὐδὲν μοὶ τάλιν ὄφελος τῆς ἐκείνων κρίσεως. Chrys. tom. viii. p. 98.

^f Nihil omnino agimus, qui nos per exempla multitudinis defendimus, et ad consolationem nostram aliena saepe numerantes vitia, deesse nobis dicimus, quos debeamus sequi. Hier.

SERM. for those who are thus flattered, to comply with
XXXIII. the opinions of others, and to judge of themselves
 accordingly, thinking themselves good because they
 are called so :^g but to keep ourselves from being
 upon such occasions, or upon any the like grounds,
 perniciously cozened, we should consider, that in the
 great judgment the esteem of men will import no-
 thing of advantage to us ; things will pass there as
 they are in themselves, not as they are rated here ;
 according to real truth and intrinsic worth, not ac-
 cording to the conceits or affections of ignorant and

ⁱ Sam. xvi. 7. partial men : even the things that appear fairest
 John vii. 24. here may prove foul there ; persons much approved
^{Isa. xi. 3.} Prov. xvi. 2. and applauded now may then be condemned and re-
^{i Sam. ii. 3.} Psal. ciii. 14. jected ; for *God seeth not as man seeth ; for man*
looketh on the outward appearance, but God look-
eth on the heart. God then will *search the hearts*
and weigh the spirits of men ; he will scan their
designs and intentions ; he will closely examine their
tempers, and exactly poise their circumstances ; he
will consider many things inscrutable to men, upon
which the true worth of persons and real merit of
actions do depend ; wherefore most vain and unsafe
it is to rely upon the uncertain opinions of men, or
to please ourselves with them ; they neither can out
of blindness, or will out of passion, interest, partiali-
ty, judge truly.

9. If we desire to judge reasonably about ourselves,
 or to know our true state, the only way is to com-

^g Quæ est hæc tanta levitas animi, quæ tanta vanitas, relicta
 propria conscientia alienam opinionem sequi, et quidem fictam
 atque simulatam, rapi vento falsæ laudationis gaudere ad circum-
 ventionem suam, et illusionem pro beneficio accipere ? *Hier. ad Celantiam.*

pare our hearts and lives with the law of God, judging ourselves by that rule, according to which God will judge us. If we find in our hearts the love of God and goodness, (sincere, although imperfect;) if we perceive ourselves disposed to keep God's commandments, (to live piously, righteously, and soberly in this world;) then may we have a satisfactory hope concerning our state; then *we may*, as St. John saith, *have confidence toward God, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing to him*: but if we do not find that mind in us, and that practice, we, in conceiting well of ourselves upon any other grounds, do but flatter and impose upon ourselves; if all the world should account us good, and take us to be in a good case, we should not at all believe them, or mind them; for, *Let no man deceive us; he that doeth righteousness, he (and he alone) is righteous*, is the most faithful advice and unquestionable sentence of St. John. It is therefore (that by resting on such false bottoms we be not abused, and drawn thence to neglect the amendment of our hearts and ways, in order to our final account) a duty incumbent on us thus to search our hearts and try our ways, and accordingly to judge ourselves: the doing which with care and conscience would dispose us to prepare for the judgment we speak of; for, *If, saith St. Paul, we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged*.

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XXXIII.

<sup>1 John iii.
21, 22.</sup>
<sup>1 John iii. 7.
1 Cor. iv. 4.</sup>
<sup>1 Cor. iii. 31.
Gal. vi. 3.
Psa. lxxvii.
6, 10.</sup>

10. The consideration of this point will guard us from infidelity and from impatience in regard to the providential dispensation of affairs here: considering it, we shall not be offended at passages otherwise unaccountable and scandalous to Providence; we

SERM. shall not wonder that so many disorders occur in the
XXXIII. world; that right is perverted, that fraud and violence do prevail, that vice doth reign; we shall not complain of the adversities incident to good men, nor repine at the prosperities of bad men; we shall not be dissatisfied with any event here befalling ourselves or others; since from hence it doth most evidently appear, that all these things are consistent with the wisdom, goodness, and justice of God, and do assuredly tend to the declaration of those glorious attributes; yea, that consequently the worst accidents here, if we are faithful to God and to ourselves, will finally conduce to our advantage and benefit,
Rom. viii. 28. according to that of the apostle, *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.*

11. In fine, there is no consideration able to promise so much efficacy toward the rousing our passions, or duly ordering and settling them upon religious practice. It especially is apt to set on work those two grand engines and mighty springs of activity, hope and fear; and with them to raise their respective companions, joy and grief: for how, if we have been very culpable in the transgression or neglect of our duty, can we reflect on this point without being seized with an hideous dread of coming to so strict a trial, of falling under so heavy a sentence? how can we think of it without a bitter remorse? Hard as rocks surely we must be, if such thoughts do not pierce us; utterly dead and senseless must our hearts be, if they do not feel the sting of such considerations; more stupid and stony we then are, than the dissolute Felix, who could not without affrightment hear plain discourse concerning the

judgment to come ; yea, more inconsiderate and in- SERM.
sensible we appear, than those obstinate sons of dark- XXXIII.
ness, the devils themselves, who *believe and tremble* Jam. ii. 29.
thereat.

If, on the other hand, we are conscious to ourselves of having seriously and carefully endeavoured to please God, and obey his commandments, how can we think of it without a comfortable hope of finding mercy and favour in that day ! If in our hearts we can say with St. Paul, *I have combated the good²*, ^{Tim. iv.}
combat, I have finished (or I have continued) *the³*, ^{8. i. 18.}
race, I have kept the faith; then may we hopefully say after him, as he said confidently before us, *From henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which in that day the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall render unto me*. If by virtue of the saving grace of God, which hath appeared to all men, and according to its holy instructions, we have denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, living so-⁴ *Tit. ii. 12,*
berly, righteously, and piously, in this present¹³ world; then may we joyfully expect the blessed hope, and the appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; then may we indeed heartily wish, cheerfully hope, and earnestly pray for that day; doing which is the character, and hath been the practice of the best men; *The Lord, saith St. Paul, will render the crown of righteousness to all them who love his appearance*; and, *Looking for and hastening the presence of the day of God*, saith St. Peter, intimating the practice of the primitive Christians; and, *Yea, come, O Lord Jesus*, is St. John's petition in the close of the Revelation, and may be the prayer of those who have the like conscience and affections with him.

¹ Cor. i. 7.
² Phil. iii. 20.
³ Tit. ii. 9.
⁴ 2 Tim. iv. 8.
⁵ 2 Pet. iii. 12.
⁶ Rev. xxii. 20.

SERM. XXXIII. I conclude, wishing and exhorting that the meditation of this most important affair may be continually present to our minds; that we may seem, with that devout man, always to hear the last trump sounding in our ears, and through our hearts; that so with a pious awe and with a well-grounded hope we may expect *the coming of our Lord*, and may *love his appearance*; that from hence, being effectually restrained from all impious and vicious conversation, being induced to a circumspect and watchful pursuit of all piety and virtue, guiding our lives *inoffensively in all good conscience toward God and man*, we may in the end be able to render a good account, and with comfort unexpressible may at that day, from the mouth of our Judge, hear those happy words, *Well done, good and faithful servants, enter into your Master's joy; Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* Unto the possession whereof, Almighty God in his infinite mercy, by the grace of his holy Spirit, vouchsafe to bring us, through the merits of our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ; to whom for ever be all glory and praise. Amen.

¹ Thess. v.
² 3. *The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.*





MAR 8 - 1943

